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Understanding How Parenting Behavior and Authoritarian Beliefs Affect Mothers' Perceptions of Parenting, Attributions For Children's Noncompliance, and Reported Responses to Children

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Understanding How Parenting Behavior and Authoritarian Beliefs Affect Mothers' Perceptions of Parenting, Attributions For Children's Noncompliance, and Reported Responses to Children

by

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For Tom, Mama, Papa, Nagymama, Kali, and PJ

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Understanding How Parenting Behavior and Authoritarian Beliefs Affect Mothers' Perceptions of Parenting, Attributions For Children's Noncompliance, and Reported Responses to Children

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This study examined whether and how parenting behavior and authoritarian beliefs affected participants' (a) perceptions of parenting, (b) attributions for children's noncompliance, and (c) reported emotional and behavioral responses to children. Ninety-six mothers viewed four brief videotapes depicting a parent actor directing a child actor toward a particular behavior. Parenting behavior either constrained (i.e., made more difficult) or facilitated (i.e., made easier) children's compliance with parental directives. After viewing each videotape, mothers answered a set of questions assessing their perceptions of parenting, attributions for children's noncompliance, and reported emotional and behavioral responses to children. Mothers also completed a short questionnaire assessing their authoritarian parenting beliefs. As hypothesized, after viewing constraining, compared to facilitative, parenting, mothers formed more negative

perceptions of parenting and made less negative attributions for children's noncompliance. There was little evidence to support the hypothesis that constraining parenting would lead to less negative reports of emotional and behavioral responses to children. In addition, as hypothesized, mothers with more authoritarian beliefs formed more intentional attributions for children's noncompliance and reported more negative emotional and behavioral responses to children. Finally, there was no evidence that mothers' authoritarian beliefs influenced their perceptions of parenting, attributions for children's noncompliance, and reported responses to children differently in constraining than facilitative conditions. The results are discussed in terms of an attributional model of parenting.

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Introduction

Parents' causal explanations, or attributions, for children's behavior have important implications for parenting. Attributions influence parents' responses to children (Dix & Grusec, 1985), and affect reported (Dix & Lochman, 1990; Dix & Reinhold, 1991; Dix, Ruble, & Zambarano, 1989) and actual parenting behaviors (Bugental 1992; Bugental, Johnston, New, & Silvester, 1998; Bugental, Blue, Cortez, Fleck, Kopeikin, Lewis, & Lyon, 1993). Attributions affect parents' emotional reactions to children (Dix & Grusec, 1985), whether parents use coercive or noncoercive discipline strategies in response to children's behavior, and can promote or undermine positive parent-child relations (see Dix & Grusec, 1985; Milner, 2003). To understand fully how attributions influence parenting, it is necessary to examine the way attributions are formed. Knowing which variables influence parents' thoughts about the causes of children's behaviors helps to identify important pathways through which parental cognitive processes affect the quality of parents' interactions with children.

Attribution theory emphasizes that when deciding why others are acting as they are, people make inferences about others' traits and motives and consider the situational forces that operate on others' actions (Kelley, 1972). As parents generate inferences about the causes of children's behaviors, they decide whether children's behaviors are the result of variables specific to children (internal factors) or reflect aspects of the situation in which children's behaviors occur (external factors; see Dix & Grusec, 1985).

When parents think that children's behaviors are the result of internal factors (e.g., intentions/motives), they are likely to believe children should be held responsible

and be blamed for their behavior (Dix & Lochman, 1990; Dix, Ruble, Grusec, & Nixon, 1986). In contrast, when parents believe children's behaviors are the result of external factors (e.g., a bad day, provocation by another person), they are likely to perceive that these behaviors are constrained by such factors and are less likely to think that children should be held responsible or be blamed for their behavior (Dix & Grusec, 1985). Internal factors can include children's effort, innate ability, or motivation. External factors may include pressure from peers, bad luck, or stressors in the environment (see Dix & Grusec, 1985; Miller, 1995). Parents discount internal causes of children's behavior when they perceive that sufficient external constraints are present and are salient in the environment in which children's behaviors occur (cf. Kelley, 1972). Moreover, parents are less likely to become upset with children and think children deserve punishment for their actions when they believe external factors caused children's behavior (Dix & Grusec, 1985).

One of the most salient external influences on children's behavior, yet one that has received scant research attention in the attribution literature, is parenting behavior. Parents have a significant capacity to influence children's behavior and to constrain children's actions (Dix & Grusec, 1985; cf. Jones & Davis, 1965). For example, whether parents approach children with cooperative intentions or hostility, are warm or rejecting with children, or acknowledge or dismiss children's wants and desires can significantly affect the quality of children's responses (Dix & Branca, 2003). Although researchers have identified ways in which parenting behavior affects children's conduct (Lay, Waters, & Park, 1989; Maccoby & Martin, 1983), much less is known about whether

parents perceive parenting behavior as an external constraint on children's behavior and use this information to infer the causes of children's conduct.

One key factor that may determine whether parents perceive parenting as an external constraint on children's behavior may be the degree to which they hold authoritarian beliefs. Parents with authoritarian beliefs emphasize children's obedience and respect for parental authority and place a high value on children's compliance with parental directives. Authoritarian beliefs may make blame-oriented attributions highly accessible for parents and lead parents to make more internal attributions for children's behavior (Coplan, Hastings, Lagace-Seguin, & Moulton, 2002; Dix & Reinhold, 1991; Hastings & Rubin, 1999). If parents display a general tendency to form internal, as compared to external, attributions, they may be less likely to perceive parenting behavior as constraining children's conduct.

The main purpose of this study was to determine if mothers perceived external constraints imposed by parents on children's behavior when evaluating parenting, forming attributions for children's noncompliance, and reporting responses to children. Parenting behavior was operationally defined as constraining (i.e., making compliance more difficult) or facilitative (i.e., making compliance easier). It was expected that after viewing constraining, as compared to facilitative, parenting, mothers would be (a) more likely to perceive parenting constraints on children's behavior, (b) less likely to form negative attributions for children's noncompliance, and (c) less likely to report negative emotional and behavioral responses to children. Moreover, this study examined whether individual differences in authoritarian beliefs predicted mothers' perceptions of

parenting, attributions for children's noncompliance, and reported emotional and behavioral responses to children.

An Overview of Attribution Theory

Attribution theory specifies how people think about and glean meaning from what occurs around them (Heider 1944, 1958). According to attribution theory, people sift through information available to them concerning others' behaviors and formulate explanations for why those behaviors occur (see Dix & Grusec, 1985). Thus, attribution formation is a relatively logical process of judging the causes of others' behavior based on perceptions of variables influencing others' actions. Researchers studying attribution processes have conceptualized attributions along four major dimensions: internal-external (sometimes termed dispositional-situational), stable-unstable, general-specific, and controllable-uncontrollable.

Adults vary in the ways they describe the causes of events in their lives. Rotter (1966) noted that adults referred to the causes of their own behaviors as a function of either internal or external factors and termed this 'locus of control'. Individuals with an internal locus of control believed that they were personally responsible for what happened to them and were likely to attribute their own outcomes to internal factors, such as effort or ability. In contrast, individuals with an external locus of control were more likely to attribute their outcomes to external factors such as luck, fate, or the actions of others. In addition to Rotter, others (Heider, 1958; Kelley, 1967; Weiner, Frieze, Kukla, Reed, Rest, & Rosenbaum, 1971) have noted that when making attributions for behavior, people differentiate between causal factors that lie within individuals (internal) and those

that lie in the environment (external) (Forsterling, 2001). When behaviors are deemed to be the result of stable internal factors (often called dispositional factors), people think behaviors are more informative of others' general tendencies. In contrast, when people think behaviors are caused by unstable external factors (often called situational factors), they think that behavior is informative about forces in the situation but not about others' dispositions or personality characteristics (Weiner, 1979).

Attributions also vary along a dimension of stable or unstable. Outcomes and behavior are interpreted as the result of chronic, long-lived, and recurrent (stable; e.g., neuroticism) causes or as the consequence of transient, short-lived, and nonrecurrent (unstable; e.g., bad mood) causes (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978). People make attributions for behavior based on their perceptions of the stability of the cause of a behavior, or the extent to which they think it is likely to remain stable or change over time. For example, when someone attributes aggressive behavior to a person's stable disposition to be aggressive, they believe that behavior is likely to remain unchanged over time; when they attribute it to a temporary physiological cause, they do not expect the behavior to be predictable later (Weiner, 1986).

Attributions also vary along a dimension of generality; whether outcomes and behaviors are seen as occurring across situations (general) or as specific to a particular situation (specific; Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978). For example, when someone attributes aggressive behavior to a person's general tendency to be aggressive, they expect that person to act aggressively in a variety of situations (Jones & Davis,

1965). People expect behavior caused by general factors (e.g., low ability) to recur more than behavior caused by situation-specific factors.

Finally, behavior is attributed to controllable causes when people believe others have control over their behavior and it's outcome. In contrast, behavior is attributed to uncontrollable causes when people perceive that behavior is the result of factors outside of a person's control (Weiner, 1980). Typically, people perceive actors as more at fault when they attribute their behavior to controllable factors (e.g., lack of effort) than uncontrollable factors (e.g., low intelligence; cf. Weiner, 1980; for an exception see Fincham & Shultz, 1981).

Attributions and Parenting Behavior

In the 1980's, researchers began applying basic tenets of attribution theory to advance understanding of parenting and parent-child interaction. Attributions were examined to understand the development of parents' negative emotional reactions to children (Dix, 1991), discipline strategies in response to children's misbehaviors (Dix & Lochman, 1990), and even child abuse (Bugental, Blue, & Cruzcosa, 1989). Parents' interactions with children are particularly amenable to study from an attributional perspective because they embody a number of features that have been shown to increase attributional activity (Hewstone, 1989) including expectations of continued interaction between perceiver and target, a desire for control on the part of the perceiver, and the presence of unexpected outcomes (Miller, 1995). Children also "represent frequent, important, and challenging targets for any parent's social-cognitive efforts" (Miller,

1995, p. 1557). Expanding our understanding of parenting using an attributional framework can promote our understanding of parents' reactions to children.

Parents may decide how to respond to children's behaviors based on implicit answers to questions such as, "Why is my child acting this way?" and "Is my child's behavior due to her personality or something about the situation she is in"? One factor that parents may consider is the degree to which they think children can control their behavior and have knowledge of the effects of their actions (see Jones & Davis, 1965). Parents are more likely to attribute children's behavior to internal dispositions, and think children deserve discipline for their actions, if they think children understand and can control their behavior than if they do not (Dix, 1993). Moreover, as dispositional attributions for children's negative behavior increase, parents are more likely to recommend punishment and less likely to recommend instruction or reasoning with children (Dix et al., 1989).

Another factor that may determine parents' responses to children's behavior is the extent to which parents hold children responsible for their actions. The seminal theories of Heider (1958) and of Jones and Davis (1965) suggest that, when parents perceive children as having knowledge of the consequences of their actions, the desire to produce the effects that resulted from their actions, and the ability to produce those effects intentionally, they are likely to infer that children intended their behaviors and to hold children responsible for their actions (Dix & Grusec, 1985). Parents tend to hold children responsible for their behavior when they think it is a function of controllable internal, rather than uncontrollable external, factors; that is when they think children could foresee

the consequences of their behaviors, and when they think children intended to cause the effects that resulted from their behaviors (Dix & Grusec, 1985; cf. Jones & Davis, 1965). In contrast, parents are less likely to hold children responsible when they think children did not intend to cause the effects of their behaviors, were not aware of the consequences of their actions, or lacked control over the behavior that caused particular effects (Dix & Grusec, 1985).

In general, when parents attribute children's negative behavior to controllable internal factors (e.g., personal dispositions), they prefer forceful, controlling discipline and are more likely to recommend punishment and disapproval as tactics for dealing with children than when they attribute children's behaviors to external factors (e.g., a bad day; Dix, 1993; Dix & Grusec, 1985). If parents think children's misbehavior is due to transient factors, they are likely to feel that disciplinary action is not necessary to ensure children's positive behavior in the future. However, if parents think children's negative behaviors are the result of children's stable dispositions, and thus, are likely to recur, they are more likely to report that they would act in ways that will diminish that behavior, such as punishing or disciplining children (Dix & Grusec, 1985).

Attributions and Parental Emotion

There has been increasing recognition of the important role of emotions in parenting (see Bugental & Johnson, 2000; Eisenberg, Cumberland, & Spinrad, 1998). Research on parental emotions implies that emotions "engage and organize processes parents need to respond effectively to children" (Dix, 1991, p. 8). Emotions can alter parents' motivation to maintain or change children's immediate behavior, influence

parental communication with children, and undermine or promote effective parenting (Dix, 1991; Dix & Branca, 2003). Negative emotions are thought to often be problematic for parenting because they can promote insensitive, abusive, and coercive parenting. In contrast, positive emotions are thought to facilitate patient, sensitive care, and parents' willingness to comfort and encourage their children (see Dix, 1991).

One reason why the quality of parents' attributions for children's behaviors may affect parental responses is that certain attributions are related to negative emotions. In general, internal attributions magnify parents' emotional reactions to children, while external attributions minimize them (cf. Weiner, Russell, & Lerman, 1978). Internal controllable attributions may lead parents to experience anger and frustration at children's difficult behaviors (Dix, 1991; Weiner, 1985). Parental perceptions that children are not fully competent or responsible for such behaviors (i.e., external attributions), however, should cause parents to become less upset with children (Dix & Grusec, 1985; Dix & Reinhold, 1991; cf. Weiner, 1980). In fact, when parents perceive children's misbehavior as more intentional and more dispositional in origin (internal controllable attribution), they report more negative affect and attach greater importance to responding to children's misbehavior (Dix, 1993; Dix et al., 1986).

Parents' perceptions of the situational pressures that may operate on children's behavior may determine their attributions and emotional reactions. In one study, mothers' attributions and reactions to children were influenced by cues concerning how difficult obedient behavior was for children (Dix & Reinhold, 1991). Mothers watched videotapes of children disobeying parental requests either immediately or following a short delay. As

time elapses, compliance is expected to be more difficult for children because they must remember what it is they were asked to do; thus, external attributions would increase with delayed disobedience. This finding was demonstrated in Dix & Reinhold's research; mothers made more internal attributions, were more likely to hold children responsible for their behavior, and were more upset by children's noncompliance when it reflected immediate, as opposed to delayed, disobedience.

Children's Compliance in the Context of Constraining and Facilitative Parenting

Sometimes, children do intend and control their negative behavior. At other times, however, negative behaviors are the result of external uncontrollable factors that constrain children's ability to express their dispositions and intentions in behavior. Parents' behavior is one critical external factor that can facilitate or constrain children's behavior, or make compliance more difficult for children. Parenting can shape, reinforce, and maintain both desirable and undesirable child behaviors (Wahl, Johnson, Johansson, & Martin, 1974). For example, when parents communicate their desire to cooperate with children's motives, they promote children's compliance with parental directives (Dix, 1991; Dix & Branca, 2003; Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Lay, Waters, & Park, 1989).

In contrast, when parents are coercive (Patterson, 1980), do not provide reasons for their directives (see Crockenberg & Litman, 1990), fail to obtain children's attention (Maccoby & Martin, 1983), or use inadequate child management techniques (Burgess & Conger, 1978), they undermine children's compliance with parental directives. Some parents may be aware that when parents issue a command to children harshly or with an impatient tone, they may upset children and reduce the chance that children will comply

(see Dix, 1991; Dix & Branca, 2003). Thus, a perceiver may infer that parenting is a constraint on children's ability to comply.

Because they function to make compliance more difficult, a number of parenting behaviors may increase a parent's attribution that a child's noncompliance is unintended and not under the child's control. Although the constellation of parenting behaviors that, in any given situation, may constrain children's compliance is undoubtedly vast and variable, researchers have specified some parenting behaviors that make compliance more difficult for young children.

Commanding Unclearly or Without Reason. To comply, children must understand what parents want them to do and be motivated to do so. This requires that parents explain clearly what is expected from children and why. If parents fail to provide children with reasonable incentives in the form of reasons or explanations for why they want children to act in particular ways, their behavior constrains children's ability to comply. Often, parents obtain compliance from children by persuading, suggesting, and adapting their requests to what they think that the child will accept (Crockenberg & Litman, 1990). Reasons help motivate children to want to engage in behaviors that are in accordance with parents' desires. In this way, parents motivate children to comply by exercising a degree of flexibility to get children to do what they want. Researchers have found that parents are more likely to obtain compliance from children when they use reasoning strategies (Oldershaw, Walters, & Hall, 1986). Even young children can be motivated to do as parents wish when parents provide reasons that are clear and compelling for

specific behaviors to occur (e.g., "You have to stop playing now because your sister is waiting for us to pick her up from school."; Dix & Branca, 2003).

Reasoning represents a facilitative environment for child compliance because it helps children understand what is expected and why. Children's resistance to parental commands may be reduced, and children's compliance promoted, if children perceive parents' wishes as reasonable and fair (Grusec & Goodnow, 1994). Children will perceive commands as reasonable if parents provide explanations for why they want children to engage in specific behaviors (see Dix & Branca, 2003). Reasoning also has been shown to reduce children's defiant reactions to parental force (Crockenberg & Litman, 1990; Gershoff & Dix, 2002).

Failing to Consider Child Attention. Before children can comply with parental directives, they need to perceive and process the information being conveyed in those directives. Young children's attention and memory are not yet fully developed, and often, they need the help of their caregivers to orient their attention to specific commands. Only then can children understand parental expectations and control their actions (Schaffer & Crook, 1979; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Parents provide an environment that facilitates compliance when they coordinate their commands with children's focus of attention. When parents' directives are unrelated to the targets of children's attention and activities, children fail to comply more often than when parents direct children to a task that is consistent with children's focus of attention (Matas, Arend, & Sroufe, 1978; Schaffer & Crook, 1979).

> "Parents who closely monitor the attentional state of their children, and adapt the nature of their demand to it, sequencing their demands so as to obtain orientation first and then narrowing down the demands toward the more specific action required, will have more success in obtaining compliance than parents who issue directives that are not geared to the child's initial state of orientation and involvement" (Maccoby & Martin, 1983, p. 66).

Linking commands to children's current focus of attention may be particularly important with young children. To facilitate compliance, parents can first notice to what children are attending (e.g., looking at a stack of toys), elicit clear and focused attention, and then direct children to enact a specific behavior (e.g., put the toys into the basket). When an adult gives an instruction to a child who is not fully attending to the parent, the child's compliance with those instructions decreases (Peterson & Whitehurst, 1971). This may be, in part, because the adult did not obtain or maintain the child's attention sufficiently for the child to understand what was required of her.

Communicating Negative Affect. The affectional climate between parents and children creates a powerful motive for children to act as parents wish or to resist parental directives (Dix & Branca, 2003; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). When parents communicate negative emotion to children, children are less likely to feel motivated to comply with parents' wishes (Dix & Branca, 2003). Negative maternal moods have been associated with less positive child responsiveness to maternal directions and commands (Jouriles, Murphy, & O'Leary, 1989) and evidence suggests that negative maternal mood interferes with mothers' capacity to elicit compliance from children (Kochanska, Kuczynski, &

Maguire, 1989; Kochanska, Kuczynski, Radke-Yarrow, & Welsh, 1987; Kuczynski, 1984).

Considerable evidence suggests that parents provide an environment that facilitates children's compliance with their directives when they make requests in a positive, rather than a negative, manner. Children are more likely to comply when parental directives are issued in a warm and pleasant tone of voice (Lytton, 1980; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Warm parental affection that is communicated through parents' use of a positive tone makes children eager to please parents and comply with parents' wishes (Hoffman, 1970; Lay, Waters, & Park, 1989). Mothers who freely express positive emotion during various joint mother-child tasks have children who are generally low in disobedience and are predisposed to cooperation (Hatfield, Ferguson & Alpert, 1967).

In summary, perceivers should infer what children need from parents to promote compliance with their directives. When parents fail to elicit children's full attention, fail to justify requests, and express negative affect, they limit children's ability to understand and want to fulfill what parents seek from them and make compliance more difficult for children. Perceivers should make judgments of parent-child interaction with this in mind. Thus, they should perceive such behaviors as constraining children's ability to comply with parental directives and should form judgments of parent-child interaction accordingly.

Authoritarian Beliefs and Judgments of Parent-Child Interaction

Authoritarian beliefs reflect parents' enduring attitudes about children and childrearing. Parents with authoritarian beliefs think that children should adhere strictly to parental commands, refrain from questioning parental authority, and be raised in a disciplined environment in the presence of firm parental controls (Baumrind, 1973). Authoritarian beliefs can bias information processing by guiding parents' attention, memory, and judgment processes (Dix et al., 1989) and can influence parents' ideas about what children are like and how they should behave. These beliefs may influence how parents conceptualize specific moments of child behavior and affect parents' reported responses to children (Dix et al., 1989).

Authoritarian beliefs may promote negative judgments about children's behaviors, lead parents to hold children responsible for their misdeeds, and lead them to attribute competence, knowledge, capacity, and responsibility to misbehaving children because they make constructs of competence and blame highly accessible for parents (Dix et al., 1989). Thus, authoritarian beliefs can affect whether parents think children intend, are in control of, and should be held responsible for their behaviors and in what instances children deserve punishment for their actions (see Milner, 2003).

In previous research, mothers' reports of their authoritarian beliefs have been related to attributions for and reported responses to children's negative behavior. Mothers with greater authoritarian beliefs are more likely than those with less authoritarian beliefs to make intentional attributions and hold children responsible for their disobedience (Dix et al., 1989; Dix & Reinhold, 1991). Authoritarian mothers also have been found to make

fewer external attributions for children's negative behavior (Coplan et al., 2002). Moreover, mothers with more authoritarian beliefs are more likely to report feeling upset with children and think disapproval and discipline should be expressed at children for their negative behavior than those with less authoritarian beliefs (Dix & Reinhold, 1990).

The tendency to attribute children's negative behavior to internal controllable factors may make authoritarian parents less likely to perceive parenting constraints on children's behavior and less likely to evaluate constraining parenting negatively. An emphasis on children's culpability for disobedience may lead authoritarian parents to discount external factors such as parenting on children's behavior. Moreover, authoritarian parents may evaluate constraining parenting more positively than non-authoritarian parents because (a) they believe such parenting is effective at obtaining children's compliance, and (b) they engage in constraining parenting behaviors with their own children (e.g., command children toward a specific behavior without providing an explanation such as when parents say, "Do it because I told you so.")

The Present Study

In this study, it was proposed that observers of parent-child interactions would use information about observed parenting behavior to (a) make judgments about whether parents constrained children's ability to comply with directives, (b) form attributions for children's noncompliance, and (c) report responses to children. If parents issued a command without clear explanation or reason, failed to elicit children's attention, and displayed negative affect toward children, then observers would perceive parenting constraints on children's behavior. As a result, observers would be more likely to

evaluate parenting negatively, attribute children's noncompliance to external causes outside of children's control, and report less negative emotional and behavioral responses to children. By contrast, when parents provided a reason for a command, obtained children's attention, and displayed positive affect toward children, observers would perceive parents' behavior as facilitating compliance and evaluate it favorably, would attribute children's noncompliance to internal controllable causes, and report more negative responses to children.

By examining attributions for children's defiance, one study has found support for the notion that perceptions of others' parenting affect attributions for children's behaviors. Dix and Lochman (1990) showed mothers of aggressive and non-aggressive boys brief video segments of children responding with defiance to mothers' behavior. In half of the segments, parent actors displayed firm but supportive and sympathetic behaviors, and in the other half the parent actors displayed coercive, sarcastic, and critical behaviors common to mothers of aggressive children. When participants viewed the videotapes depicting harsh and sarcastic parenting, they rated children as significantly less responsible for their frustrated and defiant outbursts than when they viewed videotapes depicting supportive parenting. Thus, for one form of interaction common in households with coercive parents and children, parenting behavior appeared to be related to mothers' attributions for school-aged children's conduct.

Outside of Dix and Lochman's research with a specialized population and older children's overtly defiant behavior, researchers have not examined whether parenting behavior is perceived by parents as an external constraint on children's behavior.

Furthermore, whether previously observed relations between authoritarian beliefs and attributions are mediated by evaluations of parenting behavior is unknown.

This study examined the roles of observed parenting behavior and authoritarian beliefs in determining participants' (a) perceptions of parenting, (b) attributions for children's noncompliance, and (c) reported emotional and behavioral responses to children. The hypotheses were as follows:

Hypothesis 1: Constraining Parenting Behavior Will Lead to More Negative Perceptions of Parenting, Less Negative Attributions for Children's Noncompliance, and Less Negative Reported Responses to Children

Participants' judgments of parenting behavior that constrains children's compliance will differ from their judgments of parenting behavior that facilitates children's compliance in the following ways. They will be more likely to perceive parenting negatively as indicated by (a) negative evaluations of parenting, (b) reports of parent blame for children's noncompliance, and (c) perceptions of parenting constraints on children's behavior. They will be less likely to report that (a) children should be held responsible for their behavior, (b) children are intentionally resisting parental commands, (c) compliance is easy for children, and that (c) children are in control of their behavior. In addition, these participants will be less likely to (a) report feeling upset at children, (b) agree that children should be disciplined for noncompliance, (c) report that disapproval should be expressed at children, (d) report they would give children a long time out for noncompliance, and (e) report parent-oriented responses for children's noncompliance.

Hypothesis 2: The Relationship Between Parenting Behavior and Participants' Attributions for Children's Noncompliance Will be <u>Mediated</u> by Participants' Perceptions of Parenting

When participants view children's behavior in the context of parenting that constrains, rather than facilitates, children's compliance, they will be less likely to report (a) children are responsible for their noncompliance, (b) children are intentionally resisting parental commands, (c) compliance is easy for children, and (d) children are in control of their behavior, in part, because they will be more likely to (a) evaluate parents poorly, (b) blame parents for children's noncompliance, and (c) perceive parenting constraints on children's behavior.

Hypothesis 3: Authoritarian Beliefs Will Lead to Less Negative Perceptions of Parenting, More Negative Attributions for Children's Noncompliance, and More Negative Reported Responses to Children

Participants with more authoritarian beliefs will be less likely to (a) evaluate parenting behavior negatively, (b) blame parent actors for children's noncompliance, and (c) perceive parenting constraints on children's behavior. They will also be more likely to report that (a) children are responsible for their noncompliance, (b) children are intentionally resisting parental commands, (c) compliance is easy for children, and (d) children are in control of their behavior. In addition, authoritarian participants will be more likely to (a) report feeling upset with children, (b) agree that children should be disciplined for their noncompliance, (c) report that disapproval should be expressed at children, (d) indicate long time out for children, and (e) mention parent-oriented strategies in response to children's noncompliance.

Hypothesis 4: Compared to Non-Authoritarian Participants, Authoritarian Participants Will Be Less Likely to Use Information About Parenting Behavior When Forming Perceptions of Parenting, Attributions for Children's Noncompliance, and Reported Responses to Children

For participants with more authoritarian beliefs, both parenting behavior that constrains and facilitates children's compliance will lead to more similar perceptions, attributions, and reports of responses to children than for participants with less authoritarian beliefs. In contrast, participants with less authoritarian beliefs will be more likely to be influenced by the type of parenting they observe. They will form more negative perceptions of parenting, less negative attributions for children's noncompliance, and less emotional and behavioral responses to children after they view constraining, as opposed to facilitative, parenting behavior.

Hypothesis 5: The Relationship Between Participants' Authoritarian Beliefs and Attributions for Children's Noncompliance Will be Mediated by Perceptions of Parenting

Participants' with more authoritarian beliefs will be more likely to report (a) children are responsible for their noncompliance, (b) children are intentionally resisting parental commands, (c) compliance is easy for children, and (d) children are in control of their behavior, in part, because they will be less likely to (a) evaluate parents poorly, (b) blame parents for children's noncompliance, and (c) perceive parenting constraints on children's behavior.

Hypothesis 6: The Relationship Between Participants' Authoritarian Beliefs and Reported Responses to Children Will be Mediated by Participants' Attributions for Children's Noncompliance

Participants' with more authoritarian beliefs will be more likely to (a) report feeling upset with children, (b) agree that children should be disciplined for noncompliance, (c) report that disapproval should be expressed at children, (d) say they would give children long time out for noncompliance, and (e) mention parent-oriented

strategies in responses to children's noncompliance, in part, because they will be more likely to report that (a) children are responsible for their noncompliance, (b) children are intentionally resisting parental commands, (c) compliance is easy for children, and (d) children are in control of their behavior.

Method

Participants

Ninety-six mothers aged 21 to 48 ($\underline{M}$ = 33.50) participated in this study. The majority of participants (93%) were recruited via permission letters from three childcare centers and seven participants were recruited via snowball sampling (one participant recommended another participant and so on). Participants resided in a medium-sized city in central Texas and were recruited via fliers given to them at childcare centers. They were compensated $10 cash for their participation in this study. All data collection was conducted by the principal investigator and took place during the Fall 2004. Every effort was made to obtain a heterogeneous sample by recruiting participants from various socioeconomic and geographic locations.

Frequency statistics for participants' demographic characteristics are in Table 1. Participants were primarily of Caucasian and Hispanic ethnicity. The majority of participants were married, and over half had completed some college or were college graduates. Each participant had at least one child between the ages of two and six. Approximately half of all participants had one child, and a little less than half had two children. Approximately one-third of all participants reported a total household income of less than or equal to $40,000 per year, while another third reported an income between $40,001 and $90,000.

Procedure

Data were collected from participants individually or, whenever possible, in small groups. Participants sat in chairs facing a computer monitor or a screen. The

experimenter provided participants with a cover letter (see Appendix G) describing the study and their rights as research participants and asked participants to complete the background information form and the authoritarian beliefs questionnaire. Next, the experimenter passed out the video stimulus questions and read participants the following instructions before showing them the videos:

> "I'm going to show you four brief videos of a parent interacting with a child in an everyday setting. After each video, I will ask you to answer some questions related to what you have seen. There are no right or wrong answers, I just want to know what you think. Some of the videos may appear similar to you and some of them may appear different. Please be as honest as possible in answering the questions after each video. Your answers will remain completely anonymous and confidential."

After showing each video, the experimenter paused the tape and allowed participants to answer questions related to the video. After participants viewed all four videos and answered all questions, the experimenter thanked them for their time, gave each $10 in cash, and gave each a copy of the cover letter. Finally, the experimenter debriefed participants explaining the purpose of the study.

Videotape Stimuli. Four stimulus videotapes were created depicting 2 different female parent actors interacting with either a 2 year-old or 4 year-old female child actor. Children aged 2-4 are young enough to lack control over many misdeeds but also old enough to intend and have control over many others. Thus, it was believed that attributions for the behavior of children of this age would show sufficient variability to

test the hypotheses of this study. Parent actors exhibited parenting behavior that constrained (e.g., made more difficult) and facilitated (e.g., made easier) children's compliance with parental directives. Videotapes were created using precise editing to ensure that the only difference between constraining and facilitative conditions was parenting behavior. Thus, all other cues in the videotape (e.g., the specific nature of children's behavior) were held constant.

Parent-child interactions took place in two settings: (a) in the child's bedroom, and (b) in the kitchen in the child's home. This study was not designed to test the effects of setting on judgments of parent-child interaction. Children's noncompliance was depicted in two settings to maximize the chance that support would be found for the hypotheses in at least one of the settings and to prevent the findings of this study to be generalizable only to a single setting. Previous research has made use of multiple settings to examine parents' attributions for children's behavior (e.g., Dix et al., 1989; Dix & Reinhold, 1990). A complete description of each video can be seen in Appendix C.

Experimental Design

This study employed a mixed design. To control for the order in which participants viewed constraining and facilitative parenting and the setting in which parent-child interactions occurred, participants first viewed one set of videotapes. The first set depicted either constraining or facilitative parenting behavior in both the bedroom and the kitchen (the order of settings was counterbalanced). Thus, order of parenting and order of setting both served as between-subjects variables.

Second, to maximize the chance that participants perceived differences in parenting behavior and to ensure each participant saw constraining and facilitative parenting in both settings, participants viewed a second set of videotapes. This second set depicted the form of parenting behavior that participants had not seen in the first set. Once again, parent-child interactions took place in both the bedroom and the kitchen. Thus, type of parenting and type of setting both served as within-subjects variables.

The order of presentation of videos for each participant was counterbalanced (see Appendix D). Using this design, interactions of type of parenting with order of parenting would indicate that a particular type of parenting had different effects when presented for the first time, than it did when presented with a source of comparison.

Measures

Background Information Form. Participants completed a brief background information form containing questions about basic demographic information (e.g., age, ethnicity, income, etc.). This form may be seen in Appendix A.

Authoritarian Beliefs Questionnaire. The authoritarian parenting beliefs subscale of the Child Rearing Practices Report (CRPR) (Block, 1965) was used to assess participants' authoritarian beliefs regarding childrearing. Participants indicated their agreement with eight items measuring the degree to which they believed in using firm discipline and physical punishment with children, in scolding and criticizing children, and allowing children to question or get angry with parents. The following are examples of questions in this subscale: "I believe physical punishment to be the best way of

disciplining", "I do not allow my child to get angry with me." Answers for each of these items ranged on a scale from 1 'extremely undescriptive' to 7 'extremely descriptive'.

Research indicates that when administered as part of the complete CRPR, the specific items making up the authoritarian subscale show good reliability and substantial stability across time (Block, 1965; Roberts, Block, & Block, 1985). In this sample, the alpha coefficient was moderate ($\alpha = .51$). Removal of any of the items did not improve the overall reliability of the scale. Scores on the eight-item authoritarian subscale of the CRPR predict mothers' tendencies to prefer power assertive discipline, to report being upset with children's noncompliance, and to infer that noncompliant children are responsible for their negative behavior (Dix et al., 1989). This scale may be seen in Appendix B.

To calculate participants' authoritarian beliefs scores, items 2 and 4 of the Child-Rearing Practices Report (CRPR) were reflected (the value of 4 'neither agree or disagree' remained unchanged) and the items then summed. Participants received a valid score on this scale if at they answered at least seven of the eight items in the CRPR. Higher scores indicated more authoritarian parenting beliefs. The summed scores were also divided into the top third, middle third, and bottom third to be used in subsequent analyses.

Video Stimulus Questions. After each video, participants were asked to answer eleven questions. One question consisted of two parts; a closed- and an open-ended component concerning participants' evaluations of the parent actor in the video [e.g., "Would you do anything differently than this mother to get the child to (follow the

parental command)?" and "If yes, what would you do differently?"). The remaining closed-ended questions concerned the parent and child actor's behavior. Participants rated each closed-ended question on a 5-point scale. Three categories of social inferences and responses to children were assessed.

Perceptions of parenting were assessed by asking participants (a) how well the mother handled the situation overall (evaluation of parenting), (b) how much the mother was to blame for the child's noncompliance (parent blame), and (c) the closed-ended question concerning whether parents would do anything differently to get the child to comply. Attributions for children's noncompliance were assessed by asking participants (a) how much the child should be held responsible for her behavior (child responsibility attribution), (b) how much the child was intentionally resisting her mother (child controllable attribution), (c) how hard was it for the child to do as her mother asked (child responsibility attribution), and (d) how much the child was in control of her behavior (child controllable attribution). Reported responses to children were assessed by asking participants (a) how upset they would be at the child (parent emotional response), (b) how much disapproval should be expressed at the child (parent behavioral response), (c) how much they agreed the child should be disciplined for her behavior (parent behavioral response), and (d) how long they would choose for the child to sit out for her behavior (parent behavioral response). The order of the video stimulus questions was determined randomly and scrambled to create four different versions. These versions were then counterbalanced during data collection. All video stimulus questions and response formats may be seen in Appendices E and F.

Participants' open-ended responses to the question, "What would you do differently than this mother to get the child to [follow the parental command]?" were segmented and coded for the mention of parenting behaviors that constrained children's compliance with parental directives. A second code was created to measure the extent to which participants' responses reflected the use of parent-oriented strategies to obtain children's compliance.

Segmenting and Coding Open-Ended Responses

Participants' open-ended responses were divided into individual segments. Standard rules of grammar were followed to segment responses (e.g., the end of a sentence marked the end of a segment). When two different ideas were separated by a comma, each idea was segmented separately. The principle investigator and two undergraduate students segmented every open-ended response. Each segmented response was assigned two codes (see below). The categories of codes were developed based on the content of participants' responses to the open-ended questions and thus were emergent codes.

Segmenting reliability was calculated twice: first on a subset of 25 responses and then halfway through the segmenting on the full set of responses. Segmenting reliability was calculated by dividing the total agreements (number of segments agreed upon) by the total number of segments. The reliability between the principal investigator and each coder was 92% and 91% for the first check and 92% and 88% for the second check. After reliability calculations were complete, any disagreements between coders were resolved

through consensus coding. A summary of the nature of participants' open-ended responses may be seen in Appendix I and J.

Perceiving Parenting Constraints

Each segmented response was assigned one of six codes that reflected participants' knowledge that the parent in the video had constrained the child's ability to comply with parental directives. Participants typically worded their responses in terms of the facilitative behaviors they would use if they were the parent in the video. Thus, segmented responses were assigned codes even though they were worded in the form of facilitative behavior. For example, if a participant wrote that she would make sure the child in the video paid attention to her before she issued a command, this response was coded as indicating the participant was aware that a parenting constraint (e.g., not getting the child's attention before issuing a command) had taken place. The following codes were used in this study.

Obtain the Child's Attention. Segments were coded in this category if they included getting the child's attention (e.g., "Make eye-contact with child", "Make sure the child heard me").

Provide a Reason or Explanation For the Command. Segments were coded in this category if they included providing the child with an explanation or a reason for the command. Reasons had to be "child-oriented" in that they had to focus on helping the child understand why a certain behavior was needed (e.g., "I'd tell the child why we have to go", "She should explain to the child why she needs her to go with her").

Provide a Child-Oriented Solution. Segments were coded in this category if they included coming up with a solution or problem solving that involved or depended on the child to get the child to comply (e.g., "Distract child with another activity or toy", "Give the child an incentive to behave").

Change Parent Behavior or Expectation of Child. Segments were coded in this category if they included changing the parenting behavior, anticipating a problem with the child, or changing the parent's expectation for the child. They had to be independent of the child in that they did not need the child's cooperation. These could also be written as criticisms of the parent (e.g., "Parent should move to another room", "Parent shouldn't expect so much from a young child").

Validate Child's Feelings / Praise Behavior / Provide Sympathy. Segments were coded in this category if they validated the child's feelings, praised the child's behavior, or provided sympathy for child's situation (e.g., "I would say I know you like to do that but your sister is waiting for us", "Have child feel good about reading and math skills").

No Constraint Perceived. Segments were coded in this category if none of the above codes could be applied to them.

Preliminary analyses examined relationships between each of the four videotape conditions and each category of constraint perception. However, the results of these analyses were not interpretable. Thus, a composite variable was created to represent participants' total number of perceived constraints across all categories and all four videotape conditions.

Reporting Parent-Oriented Responses

Each segmented response was also assigned one of two codes (independent of the constraint codes) that reflected participants' reports that they would use parent-oriented strategies to achieve children's compliance. The following codes were used in this study.

Parent-Oriented Response. Segments were coded in this category if they included the use of parenting behaviors that focused on parents' concerns rather than on children's needs. Segments in this category included putting pressure on the child, threatening the child, exercising parental authority or control over the child, or failing to get the child's cooperation (e.g., "I would give the child a time-out", "I'd remove the pots and pans from child").

No Parent-Oriented Mentioned. Segments were coded in this category if the parent-oriented category could not be applied to them.

Preliminary analyses examined relationships between each of the four videotape conditions and each category of parent-oriented responses. However, the results of these analyses were not interpretable. Thus, a variable was created to represent participants' total number of parent-oriented responses across all four videotape conditions.

Results

Descriptive statistics for all study variables may be seen in Table 2. Across all four video conditions, participants tended to rate parents favorably, blame parents slightly for children's noncompliance, and mention several parenting constraints on children's behavior. Participants were somewhat likely to (a) hold children responsible for their noncompliance, (b) think children were acting intentionally, (c) report that it was hard for children to comply with parental commands, and (d) think that children could control their behavior. Participants were not very upset with children and were unlikely to endorse disapproval or discipline for children's noncompliance. When asked how long they would have children sit out for their noncompliance, participants selected relatively short time out (only about 2 minutes). Finally, participants mentioned few parent-oriented responses for children's noncompliance.

The majority of dependent variables were normally distributed. However, the distributions for participants' constraint perception, disapproval, and discipline for children's noncompliance were somewhat positively skewed (see Figures 1, 2, and 3). This suggests that the majority of participants perceived a moderate amount of parenting constraints on children's behavior and were particularly unlikely to endorse disapproval or discipline for children's noncompliance. Finally, although the distribution of scores on the authoritarian beliefs scale were relatively normally distributed, the range of scores suggests that this sample failed to tap the full range of authoritarian beliefs (see Figure 4).

Correlations Among Study Variables

Correlations among all dependent and key demographic variables are shown in Table 3. On the whole, items measuring the same construct were significantly correlated with one another in the expected direction. In general, participants' negative perceptions of parenting were related to more external and uncontrollable attributions for children's noncompliance, which, in turn, were related to less negative emotional and behavioral responses to children.

Demographic Characteristics

On the whole, few significant correlations emerged between participants' demographic characteristics and perceptions of parenting, attributions for children's noncompliance, and reported emotional and behavioral responses to children. However, participants with stronger authoritarian beliefs reported lower household incomes and were less likely to be Caucasian (see Table 3). When indicated, participants' demographic variables were controlled for in later analyses.

Hypothesis 1: Constraining Parenting Behavior Will Lead to More Negative Perceptions of Parenting, Less Negative Attributions for Children's Noncompliance, and Less Negative Responses to Children

The results testing the first hypothesis were based on 12 separate 2 x 2 x 2 x 2 analyses of variance (ANOVA), one for each dependent variable. Type of parenting (constraining vs. facilitative) and type of setting (bedroom vs. kitchen) served as within-subjects variables, and order of parenting (constraining followed by facilitative vs. facilitative followed by constraining) and order of setting (bedroom followed by kitchen vs. kitchen followed by bedroom) served as between-subject variables. The main findings

of interest were the effects of type of parenting on the dependent variables. Follow-up analyses were conducted to determine whether type of setting and order of parenting or setting altered how type of parenting affected participants' responses on the dependent variables. All other interactions not central to the hypotheses of the study (e.g., interactions between setting and order of setting) were ignored unless they modified the interpretation of the main findings. The results of the ANOVA testing type of parenting are shown in Table 4.

Setting Effects

The purpose of presenting participants with videotapes depicting parent-child interactions both in the bedroom and in the kitchen was to determine if findings from this study were generalizable across more than one setting. By including type of setting (bedroom vs. kitchen) and order of setting (bedroom followed by kitchen vs. kitchen followed by bedroom) in the main ANOVA analyses, it was possible to control for setting effects on the dependent variables. Any main effects of type of setting for the dependent variables are not highlighted. Instead, interactions between type of parenting and type of setting are reported. Complete results from all 12 ANOVA analyses may be seen in Appendix H. Overall, the majority of findings held up across the two settings suggesting that specific aspects of the setting in which children's behaviors occurred did not reliably affect mothers' perceptions and judgments of parent-child interactions.

Perceptions of Parenting. The data supported the hypothesis that constraining parenting behavior would lead to more negative perceptions of parenting. Statistically significant main effects of type of parenting emerged for all three of the measures of

perceptions of parenting. Participants rated parents less favorably and blamed them more in the constraining, compared to the facilitative, condition. These effects were not modified by order of parenting or type of setting. The main effect of type of parenting for participants' perceptions of parenting constraints on children's behavior was modified by order of parenting. Participants perceived more parenting constraints on children's behavior in the constraining than the facilitative condition, but the difference was greater for those who viewed constraining first than for those who viewed facilitative first (see Table 4).

Attributions for Children's Noncompliance. The results provided strong support for the hypothesis that constraining parenting behavior would lead to less negative attributions for children's noncompliance. Statistically significant main effects of type of parenting emerged for two of the four attribution measures; for how much participants thought children were responsible for their behavior and how hard participants thought it was for children to comply with parental commands. For reports of children's responsibility, this effect was modified by type of setting but not by order of parenting. Participants thought children were less responsible for their behavior in the constraining than the facilitative condition, but the difference was significant only after viewing the bedroom ($t = -3.90$, $p < .01$) and not the kitchen ($t = -1.20$, $p = .23$) videotapes.

Participants also thought that it was harder for children to comply in the constraining than the facilitative condition. This effect was not modified by type of setting. There was a significant interaction between type of parenting and order of parenting for this variable. Follow-up analyses revealed that the interaction was due to a

greater difference for those who viewed constraining first than for those who viewed facilitative first (see Table 4).

No significant main effects of type of parenting emerged for how much participants thought children were intentionally resisting parents. However, there were significant interactions between type of parenting and (a) type of setting and (b) order of parenting for this variable. Participants thought children were more intentional in the facilitative than the constraining condition after viewing parent-child interactions in the bedroom, but less intentional after viewing interactions in the kitchen. The interaction with parent order was due to a greater difference for those who viewed facilitative first than for those who viewed constraining first (see Table 4). Given the absence of main effects of parenting and that the effects were inconsistent across setting and order of parenting, these interactions were not considered meaningful.

No significant main effects or interactions of type of parenting emerged for how much participants thought children could control their behavior.

Emotional and Behavioral Responses to Children. There was no evidence to support the hypothesis that constraining parenting would lead to more negative emotional responses to children. No significant main effects or interactions of type of parenting emerged for this variable. Moreover, there was little evidence that constraining parenting affected participants' behavioral responses.

A statistically significant main effect of type of parenting emerged for one out of the five measures of participants' behavioral responses to children. Participants reported more parent-oriented responses in the constraining than the facilitative condition. There

was a significant interaction between type of parenting and (a) type of setting and (b) order of parenting for this variable. Participants reported more parent oriented responses in the facilitative than the constraining condition after viewing parent-child interactions in the bedroom, but fewer responses after viewing interactions in the kitchen. The interaction with parent order was due to a greater difference for those who viewed constraining first than for those who viewed facilitative first (see Table 4). Given that these results were not consistent across setting and order of parenting, these interactions were not considered meaningful.

No significant main effects of type of parenting emerged for how much disapproval participants' thought should be expressed at children, the degree to which they would discipline children, and the length of time out they would give children for their noncompliance. There was a significant interaction between of type of parenting and order of parenting for disciplining children, but this pattern was not meaningful (see Table 4).

Finally, there was a significant interaction between type of parenting and type of setting for children's time out. Participants gave children longer time out in the facilitative than the constraining condition after viewing parent-child interactions in the bedroom, but shorter time out after viewing interactions in the kitchen. Given the absence of main effects of parenting and that the effects were inconsistent across setting, these interactions were not considered meaningful.

Hypothesis 2: The Relationship Between Parenting Behavior and Participants' Attributions for Children's Noncompliance Will be Mediated by Participants' Perceptions of Parenting

Baron and Kenny's (1986) procedure for testing mediation was used to examine whether perceptions of parenting mediated the relationship between parenting behavior and attributions for children's noncompliance. In order for mediation to be inferred, the procedure requires that (a) collinearity exists among independent, dependent, and mediating variables; and (b) the relation of independent and dependent variables significantly declines when controlling for the mediating variable. This hypothesis was examined separately for the first two videotapes and the last two videotapes participants viewed.

The first step was to regress the dependent variables on order of parenting. In all, seven separate regression analyses were run for the first and second set of videotapes to examine the relationship between order of parenting and perceptions of parenting and attributions for children's noncompliance. To conduct the regression, order of parenting served as a between-subjects variable (1 = constraining, 2 = facilitative). Order of parenting served as the independent variable, and the three measures of perceptions of parenting (overall evaluation, blame, constraint perception), and the four measures of attributions for children's noncompliance (responsible, intentional, hard, control) served as the dependent variables. The following demographic variables were entered as controls in each equation: marital status (coded 1 for 'married' and 0 for 'other'), ethnicity (coded 1 for 'white' and 0 for 'other'), education (coded 1 through 7), and total household income (coded 1 through 9). Results are shown in Table 5.

When order of parenting was significantly related to an attribution, then measures of perceived parenting were entered as a second step to test them as mediators. Only the measures of perceived parenting that were significantly affected by the experimental treatment were tested in this way. Analyses were run separately for the first and second set of videotapes because (a) regression required a between-subjects version of observed parenting, (b) the second set of videos represented a source of comparison for participants after viewing the first set, and (c) order effects for observed parenting emerged in previous analyses.

First Set of Videotapes

In the first set of videotapes, order of parenting predicted two of the three measures of perceptions of parenting; overall evaluation and blame. Observed parenting did not predict constraint perception (see Table 5). Moreover, order of parenting predicted only one out of four measures of attributions for children's noncompliance (hard for child). Thus, these variables were used to test mediation. The mediation analyses are shown in Table 6.

Results of the first mediation analysis revealed that, participants' overall evaluation of parenting mediated the relationship between observed parenting and how hard participants thought compliance was for children. Participants who viewed constraining, compared to facilitative, parenting thought it was harder for children to comply with parental commands. When overall evaluations of parenting were added to the model, observed parenting no longer predicted how hard participants thought compliance was for children. A Sobel test indicated a significant drop in prediction. Thus,

in the first set of videotapes, participants who viewed constraining, compared to facilitative, parenting thought compliance was harder for children, in part, because they were less likely to evaluate parents favorably.

The second mediation analysis revealed that blaming of parents did not mediate the relationship between observed parenting and how hard participants thought compliance was for children. Participants who viewed constraining, compared to facilitative, parenting thought it was harder for children to comply with parental commands. Adding blame of parents reduced the coefficient for observed parenting to nonsignificance, but a Sobel test did not indicate a significant drop in prediction.

Second Set of Videotapes

In the second set of videotapes, observed parenting behavior predicted all three of the measures of perceptions of parenting (overall evaluation, blame, and constraint perception) but only one of the four measures of attributions for children's noncompliance (child responsible) (see Table 5).

Results of the first mediation analysis revealed that participants' overall evaluation of parenting and constraint perception both mediated the relationship between observed parenting and how much participants thought children were responsible for their noncompliance (see Table 6). Participants who viewed constraining, compared to facilitative, parenting thought children were less responsible for their noncompliance. Adding overall evaluation of parenting in one model or perception of constraints in another both reduced the coefficients for order of parenting to nonsignificant levels. Sobel tests indicated a significant drop in prediction for both. Thus, in the second set of

videotapes, participants who viewed constraining, compared to facilitative, parenting thought children were less responsible for their noncompliance, in part, because they evaluated parents less favorably and because they perceived more parenting constraints on children's behavior.

Participants' blame of parents did not mediate the relationship between order of parenting and how much participants held children responsible for their noncompliance. After adding blame of parents to the model, order of parenting still predicted participants' reports of children's responsibility (although marginally), and a Sobel test did not indicate a significant drop in prediction.

In summary, the data provided partial support for the hypothesis that participants' perceptions of parenting would mediate the relationship between constraint-related parenting behavior and attributions for children's noncompliance. Somewhat stronger support for this hypothesis emerged in the second, compared to the first, set of videotapes. Participants made less negative attributions for children's noncompliance after viewing constraining, compared to facilitative, parenting, in part, because they perceived parenting more negatively. This was particularly likely to occur after participants viewed parent-child interactions with a source of comparison.

Hypothesis 3: Authoritarian Beliefs Will Lead to Less Negative Perceptions of Parenting, More Negative Attributions for Children's Noncompliance, and More Negative Reported Responses to Children

The results testing the third hypothesis were based on 12 individual linear regression analyses. The predictor variable in each equation was authoritarian beliefs. The dependent variable was the mean score for each video stimulus item averaged across

the four video conditions. The following variables were entered as controls in each analysis: marital status (coded 1 for 'married' and 0 for 'other'), ethnicity (coded 1 for 'white' and 0 for 'other'), education (coded 1 through 7), and total household income (coded 1 through 9). The results are shown in Table 7.

Perceptions of Parenting. The data provided no support for the hypothesis that authoritarian beliefs would lead to less negative perceptions of parenting. Authoritarian beliefs did not predict any of the three measures of participants' perceptions of parenting.

Attributions for Children's Noncompliance. The data provided weak support for the hypothesis that authoritarian beliefs would lead to more negative attributions for children's noncompliance. Authoritarian beliefs predicted one of the four measures of participants' attributions for children's noncompliance, intentionality. Participants with more authoritarian beliefs were more likely to report that children were behaving intentionally. However, authoritarian beliefs did not predict participants' reports of how much children were responsible for their behavior, how hard compliance was for children, or how much children could control their behavior.

Emotional and Behavioral Responses to Children. There was strong support for the hypothesis that authoritarian beliefs would lead to more negative emotional and behavioral responses to children. Authoritarian beliefs predicted four of the five measures of participants' responses to children; upset, discipline, disapproval, and parent-oriented responses. Participants with more authoritarian beliefs were more likely to report that (a) they would feel upset with children, (b) they would express disapproval at children, (c) they would discipline children for their noncompliance, (d) and that they would enact

parent-oriented responses for children's noncompliance. Authoritarian beliefs did not predict the length of time out participants would give children for their noncompliance.

In summary, the data did not support the hypotheses that authoritarian beliefs would lead to less negative perceptions of parenting and only provided weak support that they would lead to more negative attributions for children's noncompliance. However, participants' authoritarian beliefs did predict their reported emotional and behavioral responses to children.

Hypothesis 4: Compared to Non-Authoritarian Participants, Authoritarian Participants Will Be Less Likely to Use Information About Parenting Behavior When Forming Perceptions of Parenting, Attributions for Children's Noncompliance, and Reported Responses to Children

Analysis of Variance

The third hypothesis was tested in two ways. First, 12 separate 2 x 2 x 2 analyses of variance (ANOVA) were conducted; one for each dependent variable. Type of parenting (constraining vs. facilitative) and type of setting (bedroom vs. kitchen) served as within-subjects variables, and authoritarian beliefs (high vs. low) served as a between-subject variable. In this analysis, scores on the continuous authoritarian beliefs scale were divided at the median to form two groups - high and low. No significant main effects of authoritarian beliefs or interactions between authoritarian beliefs and type of parenting or setting emerged for any of the dependent variables. To determine whether different results emerged when the full range of authoritarian beliefs scores were used, additional regressions were performed.

Regression

To examine further whether participants with more authoritarian beliefs used information about parenting differently in making judgments about parent-child interactions, difference scores were created for each dependent variable by subtracting participants' mean ratings for each questionnaire item (averaged across setting) in the constraining condition from their mean ratings on these items in the facilitative condition. Twelve separate linear regression analyses were conducted regressing these difference scores on authoritarian beliefs and the covariates shown in Table 7. It was expected that authoritarian beliefs would predict smaller difference scores. The results are shown in Table 8.

Out of 12 analyses, the betas for authoritarian beliefs reached a significant level on only two of the dependent variables and one of these was in the opposite direction predicted (see Table 8). The higher participants scored on the authoritarian beliefs scale, the smaller the difference in their overall evaluation of parenting in the constraining and facilitative conditions, but the larger the difference in their reports of blame for parents in the constraining and facilitative video conditions. Thus, these results provide no clear support for the third hypothesis.

In summary, there was little evidence that authoritarian beliefs were associated with less use of information about constraint-related parenting.

Hypothesis 5: The Relationship Between Authoritarian Beliefs and Attributions for Children's Noncompliance Will Be Mediated by Perceptions of Parenting

Previously reported regression analyses revealed that authoritarian beliefs did not predict any of the three indicators of perceptions of parenting, and only one of the four

indicators of attributions for children's noncompliance: intentionality (see Table 7). Since constraint perception approached significance, it was tested as a mediator. Constraint perception did not mediate the relationship between authoritarian beliefs and reports of children's intentionality (see Table 9). Adding the total number of constraints mentioned to the model predicting intentionality did not reduce the coefficient for authoritarian beliefs. The Sobel test was not significant. Thus, there was no evidence that participants' perceptions of parenting mediated the relationship between authoritarian beliefs and attributions for children's behavior.

Hypothesis 6: The Relationship Between Authoritarian Beliefs and Reported Responses to Children Will Be Mediated by Participants' Attributions for Children's Noncompliance

Previously reported regression analyses indicated that authoritarian beliefs predicted four of the five measures of emotional and behavioral responses to children's noncompliance (upset, disapproval, discipline, and parent-oriented responses) and one of the four measures of participants' attributions for children's noncompliance: intentionality (see Table 7). The tests of intentionality as a mediator of authoritarian belief effects on emotional and behavioral responses to children are shown in Table 9.

Children's intentionality partially mediated the relationship between authoritarian beliefs and (a) reports of how upset participants would feel with children and (b) how much disapproval and discipline participants thought children should receive for their noncompliance (see Table 9). In each case, adding children's intentionality reduced the coefficient for authoritarian beliefs, but it was still significant. Sobel tests indicated a significant drop in prediction. Thus, participants with more authoritarian beliefs were

more upset at children, and endorsed more disapproval and discipline for children's noncompliance, in part, because they were more likely to think children were acting intentionally to resist parental commands.

Reports of children's intentionality did not mediate the relationship between authoritarian beliefs and participants' parent-oriented responses to children (see Table 9). Participants with more authoritarian beliefs were more likely to report parent-oriented responses for children's noncompliance, and adding children's intentionality reduced the coefficient slightly. However, a Sobel test indicated this was not a significant drop in prediction.

In summary, the data provided support for the hypothesis that attributions for children's behavior would mediate the relationship between authoritarian beliefs and reported emotional and behavioral responses to children. Participants with greater authoritarian beliefs were more upset with children and were more likely to endorse disapproval and discipline for children's noncompliance, in part, because they were more likely to think children were behaving intentionally.

Discussion

The main focus of this study was to determine whether mothers perceived differences in parenting behavior and used this information to make judgments about parent-child interactions. Specifically, the effect of parenting behavior on three aspects of mothers' social cognition and reported responses to children were examined: (a) perceptions of parenting, (b) attributions for children's noncompliance, and (c) reported emotional and behavioral responses to children. In addition, this study sought to determine whether individual differences in mothers' authoritarian beliefs predicted their perceptions of parenting, attributions for children's behavior, and reported responses to children.

The Role of Constraining Parenting in Determining Perceptions of Parenting, Attributions for Children's Noncompliance, and Reported Responses to Children

The results supported the hypothesis that constraining parenting leads to more negative perceptions of parenting. When mothers viewed constraining, compared to facilitative, parenting, they were more likely to think parents handled situations with children poorly, blame parents for children's noncompliance, and perceive parenting constraints on children's behavior. When parent actors failed to provide a reason for a command, approached children with negative affect, and failed to consider children's focus of attention, perceivers used this information to form negative evaluations of the parenting they observed. These findings confirmed that the experimental manipulation of parenting behavior succeeded.

The results also supported the hypothesis that constraining parenting leads to less negative attributions for children's noncompliance. When mothers viewed constraining,

compared to facilitative, parenting, they were less likely to think children should be held responsible for their behavior, and more likely to think it was difficult for children to comply with parental commands. They were not, however, less likely to think children were behaving intentionally or that children were less in control of their behavior. When constraining parenting affected mothers' attributions, perceptions of parenting generally mediated these relations. As hypothesized, when mothers viewed constraining, compared to facilitative, parenting, they thought children were less responsible for their noncompliance, and that compliance was harder for children, in part, because they perceived parenting behavior negatively.

These findings highlight important cognitive processes related to perceptions of parenting that regulate mothers' judgments of children's culpability for negative behavior. They identify parenting behavior as an important perceived environmental constraint on children's behavior. Moreover, they demonstrate that mothers attend to parenting quality when forming causal explanations for children's noncompliance, and view constraining parenting as an important external factor that limits children's ability to comply with parental directives.

Most parents can be expected to have a good basic understanding of parenting and children's development (Sameroff & Feil, 1985) and may use implicit knowledge concerning what constitutes effective parenting with young children to consider the effect of constraining parenting on children's conduct. When mothers observed examples of parenting behaviors that made compliance more difficult for children, they may have made fewer internal attributions for children's noncompliance because they recognized

that children needed more facilitative behaviors from parents to comply with parental commands. It is unclear what other cues regarding parenting behavior parents may attend to when forming attributions for children's conduct. For example, do parents recognize when other parents have placed unreasonable demands on children or when parents' expectations are developmentally inappropriate for children (e.g., asking a very young child to control her emotional outbursts)? These questions can be addressed in future research examining the effect of parenting behavior on mothers' perceptions of parenting.

Collectively, these findings support previous research indicating that people discount internal causes of behavior when external causes are present and salient in the environment in which others' behaviors occur (Kelley, 1972). Specifically, they identify parenting behavior as an important external factor that affects mothers' judgments of parent-child interactions. The results highlight the rational thought processes mothers employ to consider the effect of the quality of parenting behavior on children's conduct and use this information to form causal appraisals of children's noncompliance. They suggest that parents may enter interactions with children prepared to perceive variations in parenting behavior and develop causal explanation for children's behavior as a result of these perceptions.

Although differences in parenting behavior affected mother's perceptions of parenting and their attributions for children's noncompliance, these differences did not influence mothers' reports of how upset they would feel or reports of what they would do in response to children's behavior. Inferences regarding children's responsibility and intentionality strongly influence parents' emotional reactions and behavioral responses,

particularly in the case of behavior that involves misdeeds (Dix & Grusec, 1985). Given that in the context of constraining parenting mothers were less likely to think that children were responsible for their behavior, and thought that compliance was harder for children, it is surprising that they were not more upset and did not think that children deserved negative responses for their noncompliance.

Parenting behavior may have significantly predicted mothers' responses to children had parent actors' demonstrated more extreme examples of constraining and facilitative parenting. For example, mothers may have been more likely to report that they would respond negatively to children's noncompliance if parent actors had tried to gain children's attention repeatedly, motivate children to comply with their wishes in a variety of ways, and provide compelling incentives for children to do as parents wished. Giving parents a wider selection of responses to choose from (e.g., reprimand children; express disappointment) may have resulted in stronger relations between parenting behavior and mothers' reports of emotional and behavioral responses to children.

Constraining parenting may not have led mothers to report more negative emotional and behavioral responses to children because mothers may develop responses to children independent of their perceptions of parenting. Asking mothers to form causal appraisals of children's noncompliance in the context of constraining and facilitative parenting may tap into different cognitive processes than asking mothers what *they* would do in a similar situation. The former involves an assessment of children's culpability in the context of specific parenting behaviors, while the latter involves a preference for how one would respond to children. Parenting behavior may not have been a strong enough

stimulus to override mothers' pre-existing beliefs regarding how they would respond to children's noncompliance.

Finally, mothers' decisions regarding how to respond to children's noncompliance may depend on factors other than perceptions of parenting. Stable beliefs about parenting, for example, may be more important determinants of parents' responses to children than perceptions of parenting. Parents hold ideas about children and the nature of children's behaviors that affect their interactions with children (McGillicuddy-De Lisi & Sigel, 1995). For parents who believe in forceful discipline, for example, children's misdeeds may elicit anger and punitive behavior. In contrast, for parents who believe in the importance of reasoning and explanation, these same behaviors may increase the elaborateness or intensity of reasoning as responses to children (Dix & Grusec, 1985).

Other factors such as children's gender (e.g., Yarrow et al., 1971), children's age (e.g., Dix & Grusec, 1985), parents' experience with children (Miller, 1988), and the specific nature of children's misdeeds (Grusec & Kucyznski, 1980) may be stronger determinants of parents' responses to children than are perceptions of parenting. Previous research demonstrates that parents react differently when children violate social conventions compared to when they violate moral principles (Grusec & Kuczynski, 1980; Nucci & Turiel, 1978; Smetana, 1984). Parents' responses to children depend not only on objective features of children's specific behavior but also on parents' subjective interpretations of those behaviors (Dix et al., 1989). Parenting behavior may have predicted reported responses to children if children's noncompliance was more severe (e.g., talking back to parents; throwing an item on the floor in defiance). Future research

is needed to form a complete understanding of the effects of differential parenting behavior on a variety of children's social, moral, and physical transgressions.

The Role of Authoritarian Beliefs in Predicting Perceptions of Parenting, Attributions for Children's Noncompliance, and Reported Responses to Children

The results yielded no support for the hypothesis that authoritarian beliefs lead to less negative perceptions of parenting and only weak support for the hypothesis that authoritarian beliefs lead to more negative attributions for children's behavior. Mothers with more authoritarian beliefs were more likely to think children were behaving intentionally. However, they were not more likely to think that children should be held responsible for their behavior, that children were in control of their behavior, or that compliance was easier for children.

Authoritarian beliefs may not have affected mothers' perceptions of parenting because the biased processing of information that has characterized authoritarian parents' judgments of children (Coplan et al., 2002; Hastings & Rubin, 1999) may not similarly bias authoritarian mothers judgments of parenting. Authoritarian beliefs emphasize children's obedience to parents and reflect strict expectations for *children's* behavior (Dix et al., 1989). "Authoritarian parents attempt to control and evaluate the behaviors and attitudes of their children with an absolute set of standards. Above all, these parents value obedience, respect for authority, and preservation of order" (Coplan et al., 2002, p. 2). Parents' beliefs about parenting may constitute a uniquely complex class of social cognition (Holden & Edwards, 1989) that filter experiences with children into strategies for parenting (McGillicuddy-De Lisi & Sigel, 1995) but do not influence parents' logical appraisals of parenting behavior.

Second, although previous research has demonstrated that authoritarian parents make more internal attributions for children's negative behavior (Dix & Reinhold, 1991; Hastings & Rubin, 1999), this tendency may not lead authoritarian parents to make fewer external attributions for children's behavior. More specifically, authoritarian beliefs may not lead parents to fail to perceive parenting constraints on children's behavior. Since parenting behavior has not been operationalized in previous research as an external factor affecting children's conduct the way other variables have been (e.g., luck, provocation by another person; Miller, 1995; see Dix & Grusec, 1985), future research is needed to clarify the relationship between authoritarian beliefs and specific external attributions.

In light of previous research concerning authoritarian parents' tendencies to make more internal attributions for children's behavior (Coplan et al., 2002; Dix & Reinhold, 1991; Hastings & Rubin, 1999), it is somewhat surprising that authoritarian beliefs related to mothers' intentional attributions for children's noncompliance but not to other indicators of attributions. However, this study differed from others linking parents' authoritarian beliefs to internal attributions for children's behavior in one important way. The nature of children's noncompliance in this study was significantly more benign than the nature of children's behaviors depicted in previous research.

Others have measured authoritarian parents' attributions for children's conduct in response to children's aggression toward other children (e.g., Hastings & Rubin, 1999), violation of moral conventions such as failing to share with other children (e.g., Dix et al., 1989), overt misbehavior such as grabbing a forbidden object (e.g., Coplan et al., 2002), and general misbehavior such as failing to do as parents asked (Dix et al., 1989). It

is possible that children's noncompliance in this study (e.g., a failure to stop reading a book and a failure to stop banging on pots and pans) was not egregious enough to elicit authoritarian mothers' attributions of responsibility, difficulty, and control. Future research is needed before a complete understanding of how children's specific misdeeds relate to different dimensions of authoritarian mothers' attributions.

Finally, authoritarian beliefs may prime parents to focus on children's disobedience and thus, may make attributions of intentionality, in particular, more accessible and likely to be activated over other attributions (Dix et al., 1989). As support for this notion, authoritarian mothers were more upset with children and were more likely to endorse disapproval and discipline for children's noncompliance, in part, because they were more likely to think children were behaving intentionally. The importance of intentionality attributions in determining parents' actual responses to children has been demonstrated in previous research. Slep and O'Leary (1998) found that parents demonstrated a harsher style of interaction with their children if they had been experimentally induced to believe that their children were misbehaving intentionally. Moreover, Dix et al., (1989) found that parents increasingly viewed power-assertive parenting as a reasonable response to children when they thought children knowingly violated rules.

The data provided the strongest support for the hypothesis that authoritarian beliefs lead to more negative emotional reactions and preferences for stronger behavioral responses to children. As expected, mothers with more authoritarian beliefs were more likely to report that they would be upset with children, were more likely to think children

deserved disapproval and discipline, and were more likely to report spontaneously a preference for parent-oriented strategies. Previous research has found that authoritarian beliefs are associated with the experience of negative affect with children and parents become more disapproving and punitive in response to children's misdeeds (Dix et al., 1989). This study replicated these findings.

Mothers with more authoritarian beliefs may report more negative emotional and behavioral responses to children's noncompliance because authoritarian beliefs are associated with mothers' attempts to control and evaluate children's behaviors and attitudes with an absolute set of standards (Coplan et al., 2002). When faced with children's noncompliance, authoritarian mothers may think strong behavioral responses are necessary to ensure that children adhere to desired standards of behavior. Authoritarian mothers may endorse more negative responses to children because they believe such responses are effective at achieving children's compliance and because they use such responses in interactions with their own children. Finally, some evidence suggests that authoritarian parents approach interactions with children with a limited set of options to deal with children's negative behavior and resort to a small number of negative parenting techniques to respond to children's misconduct (Coplan et al., 2002).

It should be noted that a majority of research concerning the relationship between authoritarian beliefs and parents' reported responses to children has been conducted using samples of Caucasian, middle-class families. Other research suggests that authoritarian beliefs and parenting practices may not be associated with children's negative outcomes in other samples (e.g., in African-American families; see Deater-Deckard, Dodge, &

Bates, 1996). Future research is needed to examine the extent of both positive and negative consequences of authoritarian parenting beliefs in socio-economically and culturally diverse families.

Setting Effects

Although this study was not designed to test the effects of setting on mothers' perceptions of parenting, attributions for children's noncompliance, and reported responses to children, some setting effects emerged from the ANOVA analyses conducted to test the first hypothesis (see Appendix H). While it is impossible to know which stimuli in the two different videotapes accounted for these setting effects, two variables that may have affected mothers' perceptions of parent-child interaction differently in the bedroom as compared to the kitchen are children's age and the nature of children's behaviors.

Previous research has demonstrated that parents hold younger children less responsible for their misdeeds than older children (Dix & Grusec, 1985). The child in the kitchen was younger than the child in the bedroom and mothers may have thought she was less culpable for her behavior as a result of her age. Moreover, mothers may have thought the child in the kitchen was more highly motivated to bang on pots and pans than the child in the bedroom was motivated to continue reading a book. Finally, mothers may have thought the parent in the kitchen could have achieved her objective (talking on the phone without being interrupted) more easily than the mother in the bedroom. For example, the mother in the kitchen could have moved into another room and continued her conversation while keeping an eye on her child. Mothers may have thought it was

more difficult for the mother in the bedroom to leave with her child while her child was still reading a book. Each of these perceptions may have influenced mothers' judgments of parent-child interaction differently across settings.

Study Strengths

This study was strong methodologically for three reasons. First, parenting behavior was experimentally manipulated to depict a context for children's behavior that constrained or facilitated children's compliance with parental directives. Mothers were randomly assigned to view either constraining or facilitative parenting in the first set of videotapes. Thus, differences in their perceptions of parenting, attributions for children's noncompliance, and reported responses to children were caused by differences in observed parenting behavior. Few studies examining attributions have experimentally manipulated stimulus materials (for exceptions see Dix & Lochman, 1990; Dix & Reinhold, 1991). As a result, the majority of findings concerning parent attribution processes stem from correlational (rather than experimental) data and are subject to selection bias. Others have noted the importance of making use of experimental methods to advance our understanding of the processes involved in parental attribution formation (see Bugental & Happaney, 2002).

Second, rather than use traditional paper-and-pencil questionnaire measures, this study employed videotaped interactions to elicit mothers' attributions for children's behavior. This was done to assess mothers' moment-to-moment appraisals of ongoing events that represent more realistically than paper-and-pencil measures the myriad of stimuli that affect parents' attributions in every-day settings. We have learned a great deal

about the process of parental attribution formation from research using questionnaires and written vignettes (Bugental et al., 1998). However, a subset of attribution research has employed videotaped depictions of parenting or children's behavior to understand parental attribution processes and responses to children (e.g., Dix & Lochman, 1990; Dix & Reinhold, 1991; Slep & O'Leary, 1998). Parents' real-life attribution processes might be approximated more closely using videotape stimuli because such stimuli represent behavior as it would unfold naturally. Videotape stimuli may present parents with perceptual cues (e.g., facial expressions, tone of voice, movements) that are more similar to what parents would encounter in their own experiences with children and which may be absent in written vignettes.

Moreover, in the absence of clear stimulus cues such as those present in videotape scenarios, respondents faced with written vignettes must imagine the myriad of cues that accompany parent-child interactions in real life. Thus, it is impossible to know which cues concerning children's and parents' behavior respondents imagine and selectively attend to in the process of forming causal appraisals of children's behavior. As a result, written vignettes provide less information concerning the exact stimuli that respondents may focus on when determining children's culpability for misbehavior.

Third, perceptions of parenting were assessed using both closed-ended and open-ended items. Closed-ended items permeate research on parents' attributions. Open-ended items appear in a handful of studies, but few studies have examined attributions generated by participants spontaneously (Miller, 1995). Spontaneously generated attributions concerning children's behavior can provide a richer account of the nature of parents'

thought processes concerning the presence or absence of external constraints on children's behavior. Such attributions require that parents generate specific examples of variables they perceive affect children's behavior. These variables may not be what researchers had in mind when they designed a research study and may not appear as response choices in a closed-ended format. Thus, parents' open-ended responses have the potential to inform the hypotheses of a study in new and unexpected ways.

For example, in the present study, the use of closed-ended and open-ended items measuring mothers' perceptions of parenting constraints revealed that parents not only perceived constraining parenting negatively, but also that they were able to generate specific examples of how constraining behavior made children's compliance more difficult (e.g., report that parents failed to explain to children why it was time to go). Such assessments of mothers' evaluations of parent-child interaction provide a more detailed assessment of the nature of parents' causal appraisals of children's behavior than closed-ended items alone.

Study Limitations

Some limitations in the present study should also be noted. First, mothers' responses to children were reported, rather than observed. Mothers' reactions to children's noncompliance may be quite different when parent-child interactions unfold in real life and parents have to make decisions quickly without the chance to think through the consequences of their actions. It is unclear whether mothers who endorsed disapproval, discipline, and time-out in this study would enact these behaviors when faced with a similar situation in person.

One study has found support for the notion that attributions affect actual, not just reported, parenting behavior. Slep and O'Leary (1998) discovered that parents demonstrated harsher behaviors with their children if they had been experimentally induced to form internal attributions for their children's misconduct. Since the majority of research concerning parental attributions has examined reported, rather than actual, parenting behavior, future research is needed to determine whether parents' attributions and subsequent reports of behavior correspond to what parents would do in situations with children.

Second, the background characteristics of mothers' participating in this study raise questions about the generalizability of the present findings to populations other than the one sampled. The majority of mothers in this study were Caucasian, married, well educated, and had a relatively high household income. It is likely that the data from these mothers' responses do not generalize to other groups of parents (e.g., mothers of non-Caucasian ethnicity, mothers with low education and income, single parents).

Research examining parents' attributions have demonstrated different patterns of attributions among abusive as compared to non-abusive parents (Bauer & Twentyman, 1985; Azar, Robinson, Hekimian, & Twentyman, 1984) and among mothers as compared to fathers (Sobol, Ashbourne, Earn, & Cunningham, 1989). Attributional differences have also been found between Asian and Caucasian parents when explaining the causes for children's school performance (see Miller, 1995). Future research should include samples from underrepresented populations and culturally diverse backgrounds to determine if these populations exhibit similar cognitive tendencies as mothers in the present study to

perceive parenting constraints on children's behavior and make different attributions for children's misconduct as a function of these perceptions.

Finally, mothers' perceptions of parenting, attributions for children's noncompliance and emotional and behavioral responses to children were elicited in response to others' parenting. It is unclear whether mothers, when given the chance to observe their own parenting behavior, would display similar perceptual and attributional tendencies as they do when evaluating others' behavior. There may be differences in the determinants of parents' attributions when observing their own children compared to observing other parents and children. In a majority of studies, researchers have asked parents to imagine children they don't know in specific situations and to provide attributions for children's hypothetical behavior. Sometimes, parents are asked to imagine their own children in a given situation and to form attributions for their own children's behavior. Rarely, researchers have presented parents videos of their own children's behavior and asked them to form attributions on the basis of these observations (Slep & O'Leary, 1998).

Studying parents' attributions about others' parenting may inform our understanding of how parents arrive at attributions during interactions with their own children. If parents do not make different attributions about children's behaviors when observing others' parenting, it is unlikely that they will make different attributions for their own children's behavior based on perceptions of their own parenting. However, it is possible that parents may make different attributions when observing other parents (e.g., identify situational constraints on children's behaviors) but fail to detect their own

parenting constraints in interactions with their own children. These questions are beyond the scope of the present study but pose interesting directions for future research concerning parental attribution formation.

Summary

The present findings suggest that mothers attend to cues regarding ways in which parents make compliance more difficult for children and use this information to (a) evaluate parenting, (b) judge children's culpability for negative behavior and, to a lesser extent, (c) report how they would respond to children. When mothers observe parents failing to reason with children, failing to provide an explanation for a command, and failing to approach children with positive affect, they think these behaviors make compliance more difficult for children and recognize that children's behavior is constrained by parents' actions. These findings suggest that mothers are active information processors who attempt to accurately predict the causes of children's behavior (c.f., Kelly, 1955) based on their perceptions of parenting. Moreover, these findings identify mothers' perceptions of parenting as important mediators in the relationship between observed parenting and attributions for children's noncompliance.

This study also replicated previous research linking authoritarian parenting beliefs to parents' attributions of children's intentionality and reported emotional and behavioral responses to children (see Dix & Reinhold, 1991; Dix et al., 1989). Compared to their less authoritarian counterparts, mothers with more authoritarian beliefs were more likely to think children were intentionally resisting parental commands, and were more likely to endorse negative emotional and behavioral responses to children. Analyses also revealed

the importance of attributions of intentionality in mediating the relationship between authoritarian beliefs and responses to children.

Implications of the Present Findings

This study suggests that parents may possess a complex set of ideas concerning the role of parenting behavior in promoting and undermining children's compliance with parental directives. The data have important implications for understanding parents' knowledge of constraining parenting and how this information affects parents' judgments of children's culpability for noncompliance. Parents may approach interactions with children ready to attend to aspects of parenting behavior that may make children's compliance with parental directives more difficult and less likely to occur. However, questions remain concerning the exact nature of these beliefs, when they are activated, and under what circumstances they affect parents' perceptions of parent-child interaction.

Future research is needed to understand more fully the development and exact nature of parents' understanding of the role of parenting behavior in determining children's culpability for noncompliance. For example, how do parents come to develop ideas about the way parental tone of voice, consideration of children's attention, and desire to motivate children to do as parents wish affect children's ability to comply with what is asked of them? What are the different contexts in which parents use this information to form attributions for children's conduct? And finally, to what extent are parents aware of the nature and consequences of their cognitions regarding parenting constraints on children's behavior?

The answers to these questions may help us determine how we can best help parents become aware of the role of parenting behavior in determining children's conduct. Agents of change such as educational institutions, the media, and social networks can moderate child-rearing beliefs and practices (Trickett & Susman, 1988). Is it possible for such institutions to similarly influence parents' perceptions of the causes of children's behavior to include factors such as parenting behavior? Parents' awareness of how parenting behavior affects children's compliance may be important because such awareness can determine whether parental reactions to children are helpful or problematic (Newberger, & Cook, 1983). Research with abusive parents suggests that parents' perceptions of their own behavior may be related to physical abuse (Rosenberg & Reppucci, 1983). Making parents aware of how parenting behavior (their own or others') can promote or undermine children's compliance may be an important step in helping parents recognize the role constraining parenting plays in promoting children's negative behavior.

Finally, the replication in this study of previous research linking authoritarian beliefs to negative emotional and behavioral responses to children has important implications for behavioral interventions aimed at this population. Some have proposed (see Lazarus, 1991) that certain kinds of analytic processes (e.g., causal appraisals) may be conceptualized as occurring automatically with little deliberate cognitive effort. Authoritarian parents' tendency to ignore children's developmental limitations and think children are dominated by their own wants and needs (Baumrind, 1973) may make negative behavioral reactions to children's behavior automatic. If authoritarian parents

are taught alternate, less punitive but equally effective, methods of responding to children's misbehavior, they may be less likely to rely on harsh parenting to deal with children's misconduct. Future research on the malleability of individual differences in preferences for handling children's negative behavior and reactions to children may help advance our understanding of ways to help parents avoid or limit negative interactions with children.

Tables

Table 1

Frequency Statistics for Participants' Demographic Characteristics (N = 96)

Variable	%	N
Ethnicity		
White	59	61
Hispanic	19	20
American Indian	2	2
Asian	10	10
Black	4	4
Other	2	2
Martial Status		
Married	69	72
Divorced	11	11
Separated	3	3
Never Been Married	7	7
Member of Unmarried Couple	2	2
Level of Education		
Grades 1 - 8 (Elementary)	1	1
Grades 9 - 11 (Some High School)	3	3
College 1 year - 3 years (Some College)	25	26
College 4 years (College Graduate)	28	29
Some Graduate School	7	7
Advanced Degree	32	33
Total Household Income (per year)		
Less than $15,000	10	10
$15,001 - $30,000	14	15
$30,001 - $40,000	7	7
$40,001 - $55,000	4	4
$55,001 - $70,000	11	11
$70,001 - $90,000	15	16
$90,001 - $100,000	13	14
Greater than 100,001	23	22
Number of Children		
1	49	51
2	43	45
3	4	4

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for all Dependent Variables

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Skew	Kurtosis
Perceptions of Parenting							
1 Overall evaluation	96	3.36	.55	2.25	4.50	-.12	-.66
2 Parent blame	96	2.65	.78	1.00	4.25	-.03	-.76
3 Constraint perception	96	5.44	3.10	0	17	.92	1.68
Attributions for Child Behavior							
4 Child responsible	96	2.30	.79	1.00	4.50	.75	.14
5 Child intentional	96	2.28	.68	1.00	3.75	.20	-.62
6 Hard for child	96	3.12	.73	1.25	4.75	-.25	-.19
7 Child control	96	2.48	.74	1.00	4.75	.57	.60
Emotional and Behavioral Responses							
8 Parent upset	96	2.17	.75	1.00	4.25	.43	-.31
9 Parent disapproval	96	2.00	.74	1.00	4.75	1.05	1.26
10 Parent discipline	96	1.78	.81	1.00	5.00	1.35	2.36
11 Parent time out	96	2.10	1.72	0	7.5	.92	.88
12 Parent-oriented	96	1.43	1.43	0	5	.83	-.07
Parenting Beliefs							
13 Authoritarian	96	21.13	5.04	10	37	.46	-.02

Note. Authoritarian Beliefs are coded on a scale of 1 - 7. Constraint Perception and Parent-Oriented are coded as the total number reported. All other variables are coded on a scale of 1 - 5.

Table 3

Correlations Among Dependent Variables Across All Four Video Conditions

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Perceptions of Parenting																	
1 Overall evaluation																	
2 Parent blame	-.52**																
3 Constraint perception	-.37**	.23*															
Attribution for Child Beh.																	
4 Child responsible	.32**	.01	-.31**														
5 Child intentional	.04	.23*	-0.18	.61**													
6 Hard for child	-.37**	.21*	.23*	-.44**	-.28**												
7 Child control	.27**	.07	.34**	.67**	.57**	.07											
Emot. and Behav. Resp.																	
8 Parent upset	.23*	.02	-.30**	.69**	.50**	.02	-.30**										
9 Parent disapproval	.11	.07	-.23*	.60**	.41**	.07	-.27**	.42**									
10 Parent discipline	.09	.14	-.24*	.67**	.58**	.14	-.33**	.55**	.71**								
11 Parent time out	.18	-.15	-.16	.23*	.06	-.15	-.22*	.13	.25*	.66**							
12 Parent-oriented	-.06	.20	-.19	.21*	.18	.20	-.13	.11	.26*	.24*	.19						
Parenting Beliefs																	
13 Authoritarian	.11	.16	-.25*	.16	.23*	.16	-.19	.21*	.35**	.28**	.36**	.24*					
Demographic Variables																	
14 White Non-Hispanic	.11	-.05	-.05	.08	-.01	-.08	-.13	.04	-.06	-.03	-.05	-.05	-.27**				
15 Married	.13	-.09	-.00	.21*	.06	-.03	.17	.09	.07	.04	-.00	-.02	.01	-.03			
16 Total Income	.03	-.17	.19	-.06	-.16	.10	-.08	-.17	-.22*	-.25*	-.02	-.10	-.21*	.12	.51**		
17 Mother Education	-.01	-.04	.23*	.16	-.05	.09	.04	.03	-.02	.03	-.00	-.05	.17	.10	.36**	.60**	
18 Father Education	-.07	-.06	.14	.11	-.02	-.02	.15	.09	.15	.11	.05	-.07	.00	-.08	.41**	.42**	.60**

N = 96

Note. Ethnicity is coded as 1 = white and 0 = other, marital status is coded as 1 = married and 0 = other, income is coded on a scale of 1 - 9, education and authoritarian beliefs are coded on a scale of 1 - 7, constraint perception and parent-oriented are coded as the total mentioned, and all other variables are coded on a scale of 1 - 5.

Table 4

Means for All Dependent Variables by Type of Parenting

	MAIN EFFECT Type of Parenting				INTERACTION Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting						INTERACTION Type of Parenting * Type of Setting					
					C1 F2		C2 F1				Bedroom		Kitchen			
Variable	C	F	F Value	p value	C	F	C	F	F Value	p value	C	F	C	F	F Value	p value
Perception of Parenting																
1 Overall evaluation	2.71	4.00	232.19	.00	2.87	4.22	2.55	3.78	.50	.48	2.86	4.09	2.56	3.91	.96	.33
2 Parent blame	3.02	2.29	50.24	.00	2.99	2.17	3.04	2.42	.94	.34	2.87	2.27	3.15	2.31	1.99	.16
3 Total constraints	1.67	1.06	46.26	.00	1.59	0.75	1.74	1.37	6.95	.01	1.75	1.05	1.59	1.07	.85	.36
Attribution Child Beh.																
4 Child responsible	2.18	2.42	12.46	.00	2.30	2.54	2.05	2.30	.01	.92	2.44	2.83	1.92	2.02	5.62	.02
5 Child intentional	2.28	2.28	.01	.94	2.22	2.42	2.34	2.14	7.72	.01	2.33	2.45	2.23	2.10	4.51	.04
6 Hard for child	3.26	2.98	13.62	.00	3.37	2.85	3.15	3.12	10.66	.00	3.00	2.63	3.51	3.34	2.63	.11
7 Child control	2.48	2.48	.01	.91	2.54	2.54	2.42	2.43	.00	.97	2.83	2.80	2.12	2.17	.46	.50
Emot. / Beh. Response																
8 Parent upset	2.18	2.16	.22	.64	2.28	2.35	2.08	1.96	3.18	.08	2.22	2.26	2.15	2.05	1.85	.18
9 Parent disapproval	2.02	1.98	.27	.60	2.05	2.03	1.98	1.94	.03	.86	1.92	1.88	2.12	2.09	.04	.84
10 Parent discipline	1.77	1.79	.11	.75	1.69	1.83	1.84	1.74	4.54	.04	1.79	1.88	1.75	1.70	1.92	.17
11 Parent time-out	2.17	2.20	.11	.75	2.21	2.25	2.13	2.14	.03	.87	2.48	2.63	1.85	1.76	5.90	.02
12 Total p-oriented	.40	.32	4.46	.04	0.45	0.26	0.35	0.38	9.38	.00	.28	.33	.51	.32	8.56	.00

N = 96

Table 5

Regression Results Testing Effects of Order of Parenting on Perceptions of Parenting and Attributions for Children's Noncompliance

	First Set of Videotapes						Second Set of Videotapes					
	With Controls			Without Controls			With Controls			Without Controls		
Variable	beta	SE	p value	beta	SE	p value	Beta	SE	p value	Beta	SE	p value
Perception of Parenting												
1 Overall evaluation	.87	.16	.00	(.91)	(.15)	(.00)	1.67	.14	.00	(1.67)	(.13)	(.00)
2 Parent blame	-.56	.20	.01	(-.57)	(.19)	(.00)	-.79	.21	.00	(-.88)	(.19)	(.00)
3 Total constraints	-.21	.20	.31	(-.23)	(.19)	(.23)	-1.03	.17	.00	(-1.00)	(.17)	(.00)
Attributions for Child Behavior												
4 Child responsible	-.02	.16	.92	(.00)	(.16)	(1.00)	.51	.19	.01	(.49)	(.19)	(.01)
5 Child intentional	-.11	.15	.49	(-.08)	(.15)	(.58)	.01	.17	.96	(.07)	(.17)	(.66)
6 Hard for child	-.31	.16	.04	(-.25)	(.15)	(.09)	-.25	.19	.21	(-.29)	(.19)	(.12)
7 Child control	-.17	.17	.32	(-.11)	(.16)	(.49)	.22	.18	.23	(.13)	(.18)	(.48)

N = 96

Note : Unstandardized betas are reported. Order of parenting coded as 1 = constraining and 2 = facilitative. Control variables are income coded on a scale of 1-9, ethnicity coded as 1 = white, 2 = other, marital status coded as 1 = married, 2 = other, and education coded on a scale of 1-7.

Table 6

Regression Analyses Examining Whether Perceptions of Parenting Mediate the Relationship Between Observed Parenting Behavior and Attributions for Children's Noncompliance

Variables in Each Analysis	Beta	SE	p value	Sobel test	p value
Predicting hard for child				-2.44	.01
Model 1: Observed parenting	-.31	.16	.04		
Model 2:					
Observed parenting	-.05	.18	.77		
Overall evaluation	-.30	.11	.01		
Predicting hard for child				-1.63	.10
Model 1: Observed parenting	-.31	.16	.04		
Model 2:					
Observed parenting	-.22	.16	.17		
Parent blame	.16	.08	.05		
Predicting child responsible				2.60	.01
Model 1: Observed parenting behavior	.51	.19	.01		
Model 2:					
Observed parenting	-.17	.31	.59		
Overall evaluation	.40	.15	.01		
Predicting child responsible				.97	.33
Model 1: Observed parenting behavior	.51	.19	.01		
Model 2:					
Observed parenting	.43	.21	.04		
Parent blame	-.10	.10	.32		
Predicting child responsible				2.61	.01
Model 1: Observed parenting behavior	.51	.19	.01		
Model 2:					
Observed parenting	.15	.22	.49		
Constraint perception	-.35	.12	.00		

Note : Entries in first column are unstandardized regression coefficients. Sobel tests examined whether perceptions of parenting, when added to the equation, led to a significant drop in the relation of observed parenting behavior to reports of difficulty of children's compliance. The following controls were included in each analysis: ethnicity, marital status, education, and income.

Table 7

Regressions of All Dependent Variables on Authoritarian Beliefs

	Model 1: No Controls			Model 2: With Controls				
Variable	beta	SE	p value	beta	SE	p value	R^2	p value
Perception of Parenting								
1 Overall evaluation	.012	.011	.275	.016	.013	.215	.049	.505
2 Parent blame	.024	.016	.130	.019	.018	.293	.053	.451
3 Total constraints	-.156	.061	.013	-.131	.067	.053	.120	.050
Attribution Child Beh.								
4 Child responsible	.025	.016	.122	.026	.017	.115	.169	.007
5 Child intentional	.031	.014	.027	.033	.014	.025	.129	.035
6 Hard for child	-.027	.015	.067	-.029	.016	.070	.088	.156
7 Child control	.030	.015	.043	.023	.016	.161	.104	.092
Emotional and Behav. Response								
8 Parent upset	.041	.015	.007	.043	.015	.005	.204	.001
9 Parent disapproval	.051	.014	.000	.046	.015	.003	.199	.002
10 Parent discipline	.058	.015	.000	.055	.016	.001	.248	.000
11 Parent time out	.034	.035	.328	.039	.039	.318	.019	.897
12 Total parent-oriented	.067	.029	.020	.070	.032	.031	.064	.336

N = 96

Note: Unstandardized betas are reported. Controls are ethnicity, marital status, education, and income. Authoritarian beliefs are on a continuous scale from 1-7.

Table 8

Regressions of Difference Scores (Facilitative – Constraining) for Each Dependent Variable on Authoritarian Beliefs

	Regression Results		
Difference Scores	Beta	SE	p value
Perception of Parenting			
1 Overall evaluation	-.05	.02	.00
2 Parent blame	.05	.02	.03
3 Total constraints	.04	.02	.07
Attribution for Child Behavior			
4 Child responsible	.00	.02	.80
5 Child intentional	.02	.02	.23
6 Hard for child	-.01	.02	.72
7 Child control	-.01	.02	.56
Emotional / Behavioral Response			
8 Parent upset	-.01	.01	.44
9 Parent disapproval	.01	.01	.33
10 Parent discipline	-.00	.01	.85
11 Parent time out	.00	.02	.92
12 Total p-oriented	.01	.01	.56

N = 96

Note. Unstandardized Betas are reported. The following controls were included in each analysis: ethnicity, marital status, education, and income.

Table 9

Regression Analyses Examining Whether Perceptions of Parenting and Attributions Mediate the Relationship Between Authoritarian Beliefs and Participants' Attributions and Reported Responses to Children

Variables in Each Analysis	B	SE	p value	Sobel test	p value
Predicting child intentionality				1.36	.17
Model 1: Authoritarian beliefs	.03	.01	.03		
Model 2:					
Authoritarian beliefs	.03	.02	.03		
Total constraint perception	-.04	.02	.10		
Predicting upset				2.56	.01
Model 1: Authoritarian beliefs	.05	.02	.00		
Model 2:					
Authoritarian beliefs	.03	.01	.04		
Child intentional	.49	.10	.00		
Predicting disapproval				2.15	.03
Model 1: Authoritarian beliefs	.05	.02	.00		
Model 2:					
Authoritarian beliefs	.04	.02	.02		
Child intentional	.34	.11	.00		
Predicting discipline				2.69	.00
Model 1: Authoritarian beliefs	.06	.02	.00		
Model 2:					
Authoritarian beliefs	.04	.01	.01		
Child intentional	.61	.10	.00		
Predicting parent-oriented				1.12	.26
Model 1: Authoritarian beliefs	.07	.03	.03		
Model 2:					
Authoritarian beliefs	.06	.03	.07		
Child intentional	.29	.24	.22		

Note. Entries in first column are unstandardized regression coefficients. Sobel tests examined whether child intentionality or total constraint perception, when added to the equation, led to a significant drop in the relation of authoritarian beliefs to the dependent variable in each equation. The following controls were included in each analysis: ethnicity, marital status, education, and income.

Figures

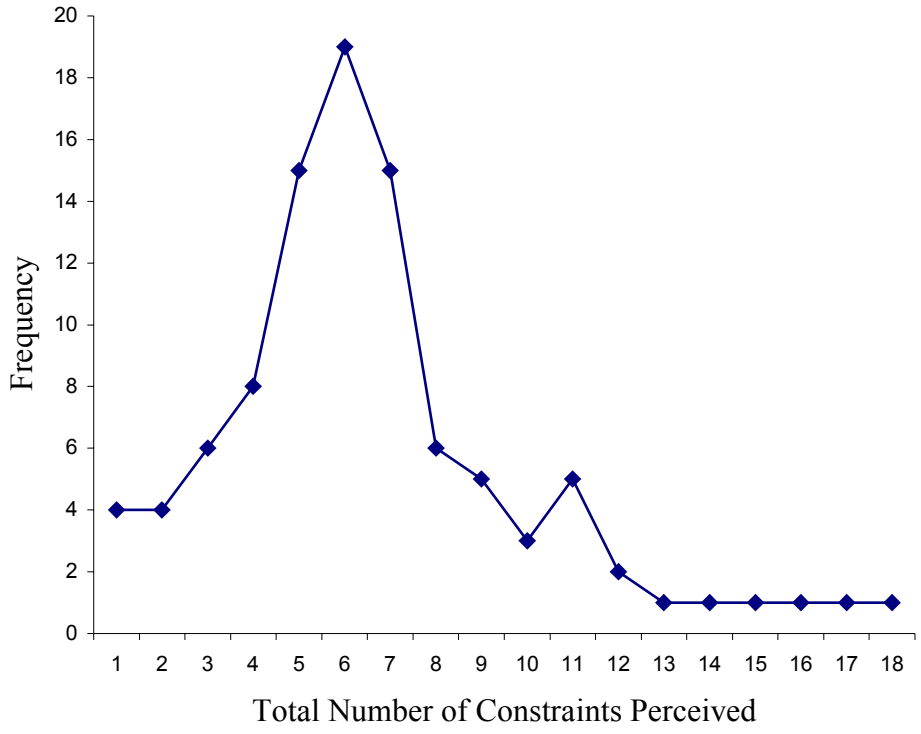


Figure 1: Distribution of Participants' Sum Perceived Parenting Constraints

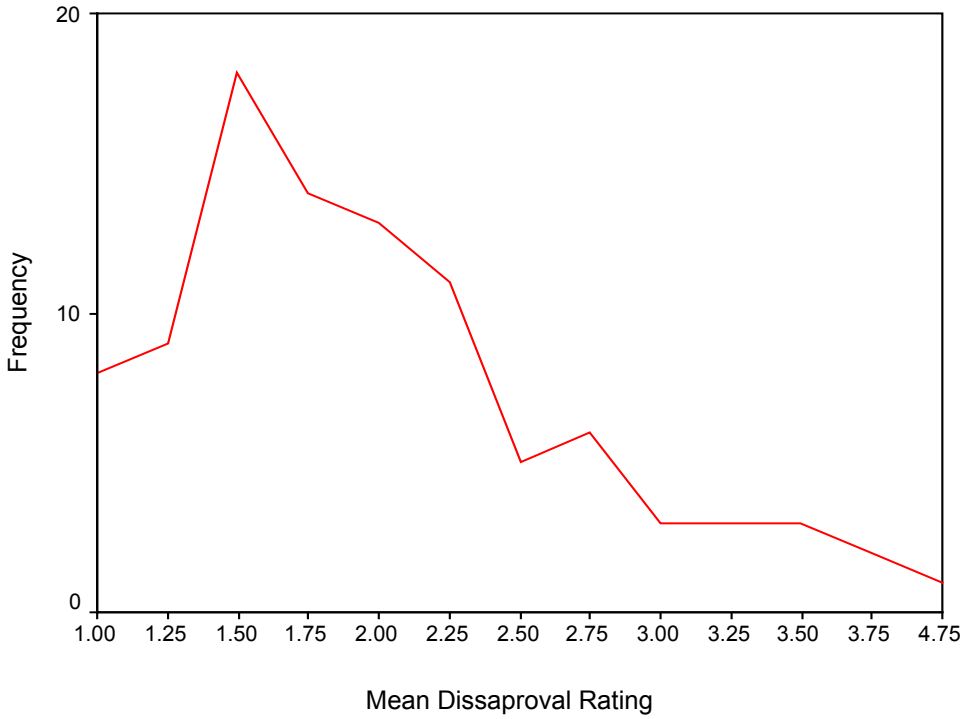


Figure 2: Distribution of Participants' Mean Disapproval Ratings

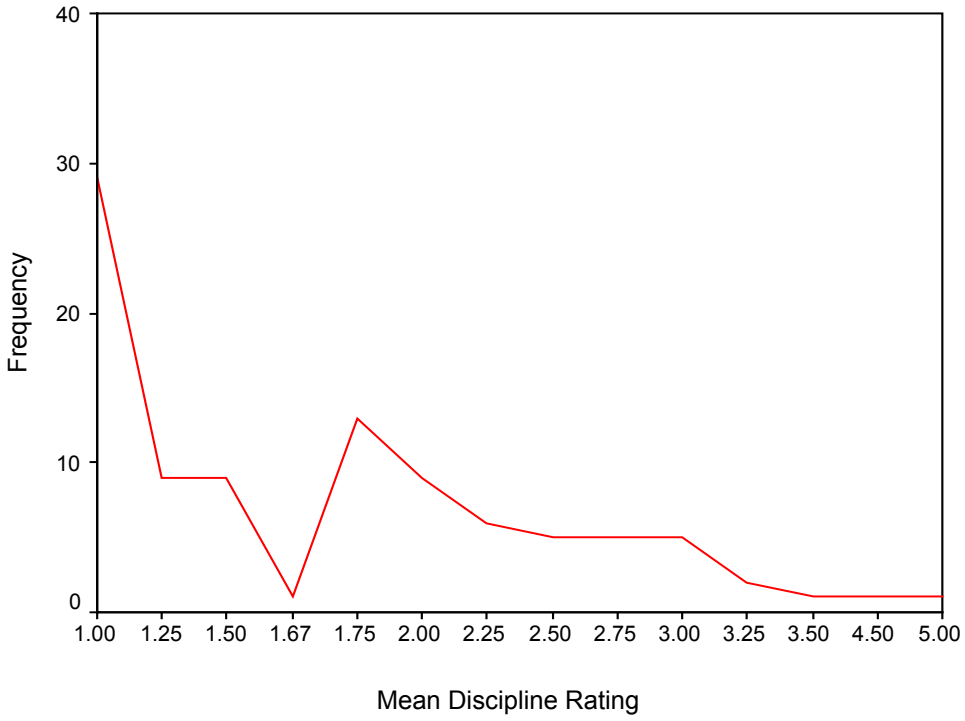


Figure 3: Distribution of Participants' Mean Discipline Ratings

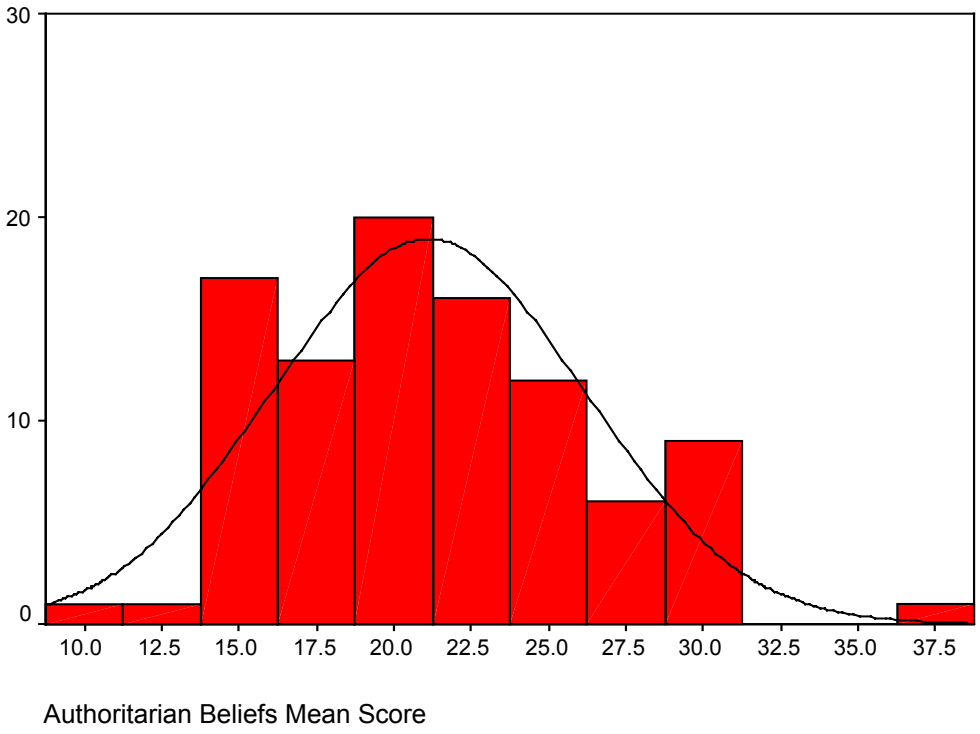
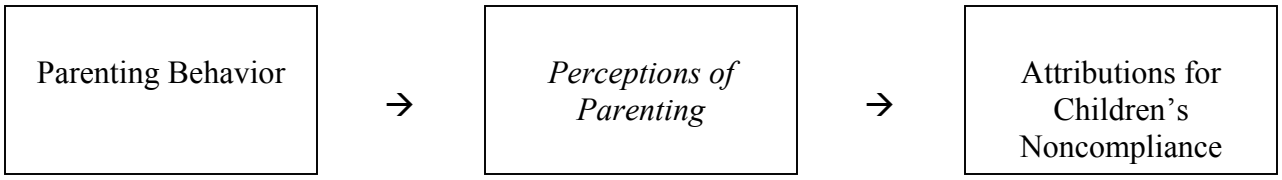
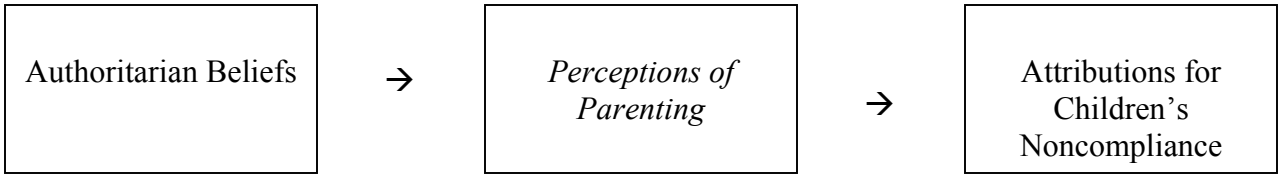


Figure 4: Distribution of Participants' Mean Authoritarian Beliefs Scores

Hypothesis 2



Hypothesis 5



Hypothesis 6

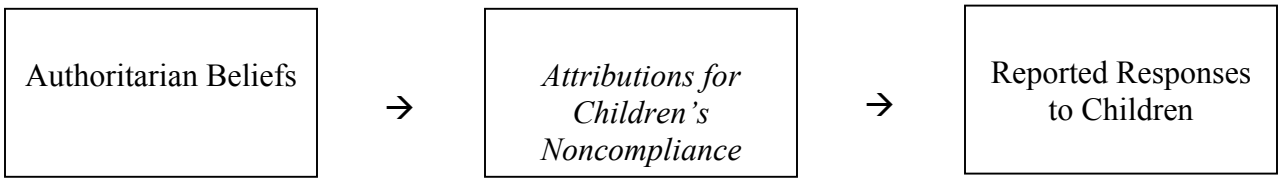


Figure 5: Depiction of Mediation Analyses

Appendix A

Background Information Form

Please check the appropriate line or write in the requested information.

Your Age: _____

Are You:
Non-Hispanic White ____
Hispanic or Latino ____
American Indian or Alaska Native ____
Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander ____
Asian or Asian-American ____
Black or African-American ____
Other (please specify) _____

Your Marital Status:
Married ____
Divorced ____
Widowed ____
Separated ____
Never Been Married ____
Member of Unmarried Couple____

Mother's Education
Grades 1 - 8 (Elementary) ____
Grades 9 - 11 (Some High School) ____
Grades 12 or GED (High School Graduate) ____
College 1 year - 3 years (Some College or Technical School) ____
College 4 years (College Graduate) ____
Some Graduate School ____
Advanced Degree ____

Father's Education
Grades 1 - 8 (Elementary) ____
Grades 9 - 11 (Some High School) ____
Grades 12 or GED (High School Graduate) ____
College 1 year - 3 years (Some College or Technical School) ____
College 4 years (College Graduate) ____
Some Graduate School ____
Advanced Degree ____

How many children do you have? _____ **Ages of Children** _____

_____ _____
Mother's Occupation (please write in) **Father's Occupation** (please write in)

What Is Your <u>Total</u> Household Income? (please check one)
Less than $15,000 per year ____
$15,001 – $30,000 per year ____
$30,001 – $40,000 per year ____
$40,001 – $55,000 per year ____
$55,001 – $70,000 per year ____
$70,001 – $90,000 per year ____
$90,001 – $100,000 per year ____
$100,001 – $150,000 per year ____
Greater than $150,000 per year ____

Appendix B

Authoritarian Beliefs Questionnaire

Please read each statement and circle the number that best represents how you feel.

1. I believe physical punishment to be the best way of disciplining.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Completely Disagree	Pretty Much Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Pretty Much Agree	Completely Agree

2. I talk it over and reason with my child when he or she misbehaves.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Completely Disagree	Pretty Much Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Pretty Much Agree	Completely Agree

3. I believe that a child should be seen and not heard.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Completely Disagree	Pretty Much Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Pretty Much Agree	Completely Agree

4. I believe in praising a child when he or she is good and think it gets better results than punishing him/her when he/she is bad.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Completely Disagree	Pretty Much Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Pretty Much Agree	Completely Agree

5. I do not allow my child to get angry with me.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Completely Disagree	Pretty Much Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Pretty Much Agree	Completely Agree

6. I have strict, well-established rules for my child.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Completely Disagree	Pretty Much Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Pretty Much Agree	Completely Agree

7. I believe that scolding and criticism makes my child improve.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Completely Disagree	Pretty Much Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Pretty Much Agree	Completely Agree

8. I do not allow my child to question my decisions.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Completely Disagree	Pretty Much Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Pretty Much Agree	Completely Agree

Appendix C

Description of Videotape Scenarios

Constraining Bedroom

Four year-old Julia is reading a book while she is sitting on her bed. She is reading out loud as she turns the pages of the book. Julia's mother walks into the room carrying a laundry basket full of clothes. She picks up a shirt off of Julia's bed and begins to walk out of the room. Before she reaches the door, she turns her head toward Julia and briskly says, "Julia, it's time to go." Then she walks out of the room. Julia does not look up at her mother when she speaks and continues to read her book. A few minutes later, Julia's mother pokes her head into the doorway and says curtly, "Julia, I said put the book down, it's time to go." She then walks out of the room. Julia continues to read the book and turn the pages, does not look up at her mother, and does not get up from her bed.

Facilitative Bedroom

Four year-old Julia is reading a book while she is sitting on her bed. She is reading out loud as she turns the pages of the book. Julia's mother walks into the room carrying a laundry basket full of clothes. She picks up a shirt off of Julia's bed and begins to walk out of the room. Before she reaches the door, she turns her head toward Julia and briskly says, "Julia, it's time to go." Then she walks out of the room. Julia does not look up at her mother when she speaks and continues to read her book. A few minutes later, Julia's mother walks back into the room, sits down on the bed next to Julia and says to her, "Julia, it's time to go now. I see you're reading and I know it's your favorite one but your sister is waiting for us and it's time to go. She will be worried if we're not there to pick her up from school. You can bring this book with us, that way you can read it in the car, but we have to go." Her mother gets up and walks out of the room. Julia looks at her mother as she speaks, but then continues to read the book and turn the pages, does not look up at her mother, and does not get up from her bed.

Constraining Kitchen

Two year-old Mae is sitting on the kitchen floor of her home banging on some pots and pans with a metal spoon. She is holding a banana in one hand and is banging with the other. Her mother stands a few feet away from her at the kitchen counter and is talking on the phone. Mae's banging becomes louder and her mother turns to her and says, "Mae, I can't hear. You need to play more quietly while I'm on the phone." Mae looks up at her mother as she speaks but continues to bang on the pots and pans loudly. After a few minutes, the sound of banging can be heard once more and Mae's mother is shown cupping her hand over the phone and speaking in Mae's direction. She says loudly, "Mae, I told you I can't hear the phone. You're being too loud. Now play more quietly!" Mae is shown looking at her mother and then continuing to bang on the pots and pans.

Facilitative Kitchen

Two year-old Mae is sitting on the kitchen floor of her home banging on some pots and pans with a metal spoon. She is holding a banana in one hand and is banging with the other. Her mother stands a few feet away from her at the kitchen counter and is talking on the phone. Mae's banging becomes louder and her mother turns to her and says, "Mae, I can't here. You need to play more quietly while I'm on the phone." Mae looks up at her mother as she speaks but continues to bang on the pots and pans loudly. After a few minutes, the sound of banging can be heard once more and Mae's mother is shown cupping her hand over the phone and speaking in Mae's direction. She smiles and says to Mae, "Oh Mae, that looks like so much fun but I can't hear the phone when you're playing so loudly. Can you be quiet for just a minute and then when I get off, we can play together." Mae is shown looking at her mother and then continuing to bang on the pots and pans.

Appendix D

Videotape Presentation Order

Participant #	**Order of Videotape Presentation**	**VSQ Scramble**
1	BC, KC, BF, KF	1
2	BF, KF, BC, KC	1
3	KC, BC, KF, BF	2
4	KF, BF, KC, BC	2
5	BC, KC, BF, KF	3
6	BF, KF, BC, KC	3
7	KC, BC, KF, BF	1
8	KF, BF, KC, BC	1
.		
.		
.		
96	KF, BF, KC, BC	

B = Bedroom
K = Kitchen

F = Facilitative Parenting
C = Constraining Parenting

VSQ = Video Stimulus Questions

Appendix E

Video Stimulus Questions – Bedroom

1. How well or badly did this mother handle this situation overall?

1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5
Very Badly		Pretty Badly		Somewhat Well		Pretty Well		Very Well

2a. Would you do anything <u>differently</u> than this mother to get the child to put the book down?

____ NO or ____ YES

2b. If YES, what would you do differently (please be specific)?

_____

_____

3. How much do you think this child should be held <u>responsible</u> for not putting the book down and going with her mother?

1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5
Not at All		A Little		Somewhat		A Lot		Completely

4. How much do you think this child is <u>intentionally resisting</u> her mother by not putting her book down?

1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5
Not at All		A Little		Somewhat		A Lot		Completely

5. How much is this <u>mother to blame</u> for her child's failure to put the book down?

1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5
Not at All		A Little		Somewhat		A Lot		Completely

6. How <u>hard</u> do you think it is for this child, in this situation, to do as her mother asks?

1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5
Not at All		A Little		Somewhat		A Lot		Completely

7. How much do you think this child can <u>control</u> her desire to keep reading after her mother asked her to stop?

1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5
Not at All		A Little		Somewhat		A Lot		Completely

8. How much disapproval should this mother express at this child for reading her book?

1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5
None at All		A Little Bit		Some		A Lot		Quite a Lot

9. If this happened to you, how <u>upset</u> would you be at this child for not doing as you asked?

1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5
Not at All		A Little		Somewhat		A Lot		Completely

10. How much do you agree that some form of <u>discipline</u> is required for this child's behavior?

1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5
Not at All		A Little		Somewhat		A Lot		Completely

11. Imagine for a moment, that you decided to have this child <u>sit out for a while</u> for not doing as her mother asked. How long would you choose?

_____ minutes (please fill in)

Appendix F

Video Stimulus Questions – Kitchen

1. How well or badly did this mother handle this situation overall?

1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5
Very Badly		Pretty Badly		Somewhat Well		Pretty Well		Very Well

2a. Would you do anything <u>differently</u> than this mother to get the child to stop banging the pots and pans?

____ NO or ____ YES

2b. If YES, what would you do differently (please be specific)?

_____

_____

3. How much do you think this child should be held <u>responsible</u> for banging the pots and pans while her mother was on the phone?

1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5
Not at All		A Little		Somewhat		A Lot		Completely

4. How much do you think this child is <u>intentionally resisting</u> her mother by banging the pots and pans?

1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5
Not at All		A Little		Somewhat		A Lot		Completely

5. How much is this <u>mother to blame</u> for her child's failure to stop banging the pots and pans?

1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5
Not at All		A Little		Somewhat		A Lot		Completely

6. How <u>hard</u> do you think it is for this child, in this situation, to do as her mother asks?

1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5
Not at All		A Little		Somewhat		A Lot		Completely

7. How much do you think this child can <u>control</u> her desire to bang the pots and pans after her mother asked her to stop?

1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5
Not at All		A Little		Somewhat		A Lot		Completely

8. How much disapproval should this mother express at this child for banging the pots and pans?

1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5
None at All		A Little Bit		Some		A Lot		Quite a Lot

9. If this happened to you, how <u>upset</u> would you be at this child for not doing as you asked?

1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5
Not at All		A Little		Somewhat		A Lot		Completely

10. How much do you agree that some form of <u>discipline</u> is required for this child's behavior?

1	----	2	----	3	----	4	----	5
Not at All		A Little		Somewhat		A Lot		Completely

11. Imagine for a moment, that you decided to have this child <u>sit out for a while</u> for not doing as her mother asked. How long would you choose?

_____ minutes (please fill in)

Appendix G

Participant Cover Letter

The Parenting Study

I have been invited to spend approximately 30 minutes participating in a study of parenting. I will be asked to fill out three short questionnaires concerning basic information about myself and my ideas about parenting, view four short video clips of parent-child interactions, and answer some questions about each video. I understand that any information I provide in connection with this study will remain completely confidential and anonymous, and will be kept in a locked filing cabinet only accessible by the principal investigator. I understand that there are no known risks to my involvement in this study and I may find it interesting to report my beliefs about parenting and opinions about each video.

My decision whether to participate in this study is completely voluntary and will in no way affect my standing or future relations with the University of Texas at Austin. I am free to discontinue my participation at any time for any reason without prejudice. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions, and have been told I can ask questions at any time. If I have any questions about this study, I may contact Sylvia Branca at (512) 232-1968. If I have any questions regarding my rights as a research participant, I may contact Clarke A. Burnham, Ph.D., Chair, The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, at (512) 232-4383.

Appendix H

Complete Results for 2 x 2 x 2 x 2 ANOVA Analyses

Overall Evaluation

Within-Subjects Contrasts	F Value	p value
Type of Parenting	232.194	.000
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting	.501	.481
Type of Parenting * Order of Setting	5.330	.023
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	2.662	.106
Type of Setting	10.383	.002
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting	.529	.469
Type of Setting * Order of Setting	1.154	.286
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	1.154	.286
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting	.959	.330
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Parent Order	.263	.609
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Setting	.107	.745
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	2.090	.152

Between-Subjects Effects	F Value	p value
Order of Parenting	12.533	.001
Order of Setting	1.674	.199
Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.501	.481

Parent Blame

Within-Subjects Contrasts	F Value	p value
Type of Parenting	50.241	.00
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting	.939	.335
Type of Parenting * Order of Setting	1.147	.287
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.211	.647
Type of Setting	2.388	.126
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting	5.749	.019
Type of Setting * Order of Setting	5.749	.019
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	1.774	.186
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting	1.992	.162
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Parent Order	3.292	.073
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Setting	.041	.841
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	2.823	.096

Between-Subjects Effects	F Value	p value
Order of Parenting	.887	.349
Order of Setting	.128	.722
Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	1.604	.209

Constraint Perception

Within-Subjects Contrasts	F Value	p value
Type of Parenting	46.264	.000
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting	6.954	.010
Type of Parenting * Order of Setting	2.166	.145
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	2.078	.153
Type of Setting	.452	.503
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting	.337	.563
Type of Setting * Order of Setting	.000	.998
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.085	.772
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting	.849	.359
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Parent Order	.300	.585
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Setting	.339	.562
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.483	.489

Between-Subjects Effects	F Value	p value
Order of Parenting	6.095	.015
Order of Setting	2.021	.159
Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.302	.584

Child Responsible

Within-Subjects Contrasts	F Value	p value
Type of Parenting	12.457	.001
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting	.011	.918
Type of Parenting * Order of Setting	2.835	.096
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.720	.398
Type of Setting	50.558	.000
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting	.525	.471
Type of Setting * Order of Setting	5.595	.020
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	1.326	.253
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting	5.618	.020
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Parent Order	.327	.569
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Setting	.218	.642
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.972	.327

Between-Subjects Effects	F Value	p value
Order of Parenting	2.268	.136
Order of Setting	1.894	.172
Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.398	.530

Child Intentional

Within-Subjects Contrasts	F Value	p value
Type of Parenting	.005	.943
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting	7.717	.007
Type of Parenting * Order of Setting	.857	.357
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	3.171	.078
Type of Setting	3.668	.059
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting	.716	.400
Type of Setting * Order of Setting	1.446	.232
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	2.161	.145
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting	4.511	.036
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Parent Order	1.032	.312
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Setting	.077	.782
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	1.441	.233

Between-Subjects Effects	F Value	p value
Order of Parenting	.308	.580
Order of Setting	.495	.484
Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.012	.912

Child Hard

Within-Subjects Contrasts	F Value	p value
Type of Parenting	13.621	.000
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting	10.659	.002
Type of Parenting * Order of Setting	1.632	.205
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	2.015	.159
Type of Setting	34.833	.000
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting	.640	.426
Type of Setting * Order of Setting	6.764	.011
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	1.211	.274
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting	2.633	.108
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Parent Order	.658	.419
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Setting	.658	.419
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	5.161	.025

Between-Subjects Effects	F Value	p value
Order of Parenting	.019	.891
Order of Setting	.000	1.000
Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.119	.731

Child Control

Within-Subjects Contrasts	F Value	p value
Type of Parenting	.012	.912
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting	.001	.971
Type of Parenting * Order of Setting	.111	.740
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	9.880	.002
Type of Setting	39.729	.000
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting	1.792	.184
Type of Setting * Order of Setting	1.792	.184
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	1.199	.276
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting	.460	.499
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Parent Order	.247	.620
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Setting	.051	.822
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.002	.964

Between-Subjects Effects	F Value	p value
Order of Parenting	.596	.442
Order of Setting	1.025	.314
Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.156	.694

Parent Upset

Within-Subjects Contrasts	F Value	p value
Type of Parenting	.220	.640
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting	3.175	.078
Type of Parenting * Order of Setting	2.542	.114
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	2.542	.114
Type of Setting	3.108	.081
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting	1.880	.174
Type of Setting * Order of Setting	4.097	.046
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.004	.948
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting	1.852	.177
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Parent Order	1.852	.177
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Setting	3.956	.050
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.274	.602

Between-Subjects Effects	F Value	p value
Order of Parenting	4.004	.048
Order of Setting	3.728	.057
Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.001	.972

Parent Disapproval

Within-Subjects Contrasts	F Value	p value
Type of Parenting	.271	.604
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting	.030	.863
Type of Parenting * Order of Setting	.271	.604
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	1.477	.227
Type of Setting	5.038	.027
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting	.050	.823
Type of Setting * Order of Setting	2.469	.120
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.202	.655
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting	.039	.843
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Parent Order	11.362	.001
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Setting	.354	.553
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.039	.843

Between-Subjects Effects	F Value	p value
Order of Parenting	.307	.581
Order of Setting	1.552	.216
Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	1.552	.216

Parent Discipline

Within-Subjects Contrasts	F Value	p value
Type of Parenting	.106	.745
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting	4.544	.036
Type of Parenting * Order of Setting	87.145	.005
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.001	.972
Type of Setting	1.311	.255
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting	.669	.416
Type of Setting * Order of Setting	.146	.704
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.003	.957
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting	1.920	.169
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Parent Order	4.865	.030
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Setting	.065	.800
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	3.225	.076

Between-Subjects Effects	F Value	p value
Order of Parenting	.028	.867
Order of Setting	.328	.568
Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.889	.348

Parent Time Out

Within-Subjects Contrasts	F Value	p value
Type of Parenting	.106	.746
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting	.025	.874
Type of Parenting * Order of Setting	3.127	.080
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	7.353	.008
Type of Setting	23.272	.000
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting	.008	.931
Type of Setting * Order of Setting	.001	.979
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.375	.542
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting	5.897	.017
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Parent Order	5.404	.022
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Setting	1.270	.263
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.049	.825

Between-Subjects Effects	F Value	p value
Order of Parenting	.069	.794
Order of Setting	1.300	.257
Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.001	.979

Parent-Oriented

Within-Subjects Contrasts	F Value	p value
Type of Parenting	4.464	.037
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting	9.381	.003
Type of Parenting * Order of Setting	3.658	.059
Type of Parenting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	1.789	.184
Type of Setting	3.083	.082
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting	.053	.818
Type of Setting * Order of Setting	1.497	.224
Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	2.030	.158
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting	8.556	.004
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Parent Order	.363	.548
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Setting	1.224	.271
Type of Parenting * Type of Setting * Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	1.997	.161

Between-Subjects Effects	F Value	p value
Order of Parenting	.029	.866
Order of Setting	.029	.866
Order of Parenting * Order of Setting	.150	.699

Appendix I

Number of Participants Who Indicated They Would Do Something Differently to Achieve Children's Compliance

Questionnaire Item: Would you do anything differently than this mother to get the child to [put the book down / stop banging pots and pans]?

Video Condition and Response	Frequency
Constraining - Bedroom	
No	10
Yes	86
Constraining - Kitchen	
No	5
Yes	91
Facilitative - Bedroom	
No	28
Yes	67
Maybe	1
Facilitative - Kitchen	
No	27
Yes	69

Appendix J

Number of Open-Ended Responses for Each Coding Category

Questionnaire Item: If yes, what would you do differently?

Video Condition and Response	N
Constraining - Bedroom	
Get child's attention	27
Give a reason for the command	17
Provide a child-oriented solution	40
Change parenting behavior	44
Praise or validate child	11
Parent-oriented response	24
Constraining - Kitchen	
Get child's attention	5
Give a reason for the command	10
Provide a child-oriented solution	49
Change parenting behavior	54
Praise or validate child	1
Parent-oriented response	43
Facilitative - Bedroom	
Get child's attention	9
Give a reason for the command	4
Provide a child-oriented solution	35
Change parenting behavior	34
Praise or validate child	1
Parent-oriented response	29
Facilitative - Kitchen	
Get child's attention	1
Give a reason for the command	2
Provide a child-oriented solution	32
Change parenting behavior	38
Praise or validate child	1
Parent-oriented response	28

Note: *N values denote the number of people who gave at least one response that was coded in each category noted.*

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